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ABSTRACT

Data on youth aged 14 to 25 in 15 countries were analyzed to clarify their views on their needs, expectations, and responsibilities in a changing society. The extent to which educational systems and practices should be modified in response to these demands was probed. Analysis showed young people are committed to family life; they value commitment to one's country; their goal in life is to live as they intend; most value education; and they view work as a normal and necessary part of adulthood. Analysis suggested that the relationship between youth, education, and other life opportunities can be characterized by three main features: schooling is the single most common experience of youth, but it does not carry the same value for all; young people are quite critical of the education system, but they believe schooling is important; and social class and gender biases are widespread. Young people's perceptions of work and employment were positive, and they liked work-experience programs. Youth seemed to associate full-time employment with adulthood, and youth programs that prolong education were viewed as perpetuating the status of nonadult. (Policy making for youth in transition is discussed, and the project methodology is appended.) (YLB)

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EDUCATION AND WORK
THE VIEWS OF THE YOUNG

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It has long been CERI's belief that the only practical way of getting at the real issues of the relationship between education and society is to identify specific problem areas where viable options can be formulated and to work on these. Thus, from earlier investigations in the more general sphere of secondary education it was logical to direct attention to the changing needs of particular groups of people and what these might, or should, evoke by way of response from the education systems and practice in OECD countries. Four groups were initially chosen for such special attention: young children, the handicapped, adults and young people over the years of transition from school to work. On this last group two research projects were undertaken. One - carried out in collaboration with the Nordic countries - went into the problems and possibilities of a Youth Guarantee (to get a reasonable balance between youth protection and incentives to enter normal work). The other - the subject of the present report - studied the observed aims, opinions and aspirations of the young themselves.

This project took two and a half years to complete and was based on the assembly, analysis and compilation of a very broad range of data covering fifteen nationalities. In this work the CERI Secretariat was guided, assisted and much encouraged by an advisory group of specialists representative of the countries participating in the programme.

What emerges is a fascinating picture of how young people, between 14 and 25 and in a number of widely different circumstances, feel about themselves, their place in the family, at school, in or out of work, their future; and what they consider ought to be done to narrow the gap between the needs thus expressed and their fulfilment.

Both policy-makers and the general public will find it instructive to see how young people are reacting to the social and economic environment which has resulted from lower economic growth and high unemployment. This report throws up some major problems as posed by the young themselves. It is hoped that policy responses of Member countries will be illuminated and improved as a result.

The report was prepared in the OECD Secretariat under whose authority it is now published. Responsible for its compilation, as for the project, was Carla Fasano, Administrator in CERI.

J. R. Gass
Director, Centre for Educational
Research and Innovation

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INTRODUCTION

> What we all fear, with more or less intensity, is the future. Our fear of the future is probably no different, fundamentally, from the fear that torments the young, except that their future will necessarily be longer. The anxiety of young people is disquieting because it is ours too.(1)

> *I am twenty years old, I am young and it seems to me that that is my one and only quality.*(2)

This project was initiated by CERI in 1979 with a two-fold purpose: i) to assemble and clarify the views of adolescents on their needs, expectations and responsibilities in a changing society; ii) to probe the extent to which education systems and practices should, or could, be modified in response to these demands.

These objectives were pursued through the assembly, analysis and in-depth consideration of data derived from a very wide field over 15 countries. Sources include policy and research studies, official statements by national and local authorities, case studies, informal discussions with practitioners and field workers, as well as from groups of young people themselves.

Out of these data a pretty clear picture has emerged of how they feel about themselves, their place in the family, in school and at work. This reveals that the common view of young people as intensely dissatisfied and disaffected from their families and adult society is a considerable oversimplification. Most of those represented in our survey expressed a shared sense of values with adults. They believe that schools ought to be a valued institution, and that they are themselves responsible for holding jobs and working hard. They take pride in their families, and expect to live in families as adults.

Yet at the same time, many young people are confused about the most appropriate behaviour to adopt or, more accurately, what road to adulthood they should take. They find school frustrating, the lack and quality of work disturbing. They are dubious that governmental policies will enhance their lives to any great extent.

For a minority, though, it is true that disaffiliation is severe. They are less confused and dubious than hostile and angry. They find nothing to praise in society, and have no expectation that their lives will improve.

This report explores the meaning of these varied and often conflicting views among young people; and through them, it seeks to identify the processes already in motion under a variety of pressures - social, political, economic and demographic - that are most likely to shape their future.

The task of defining the category "youth" has not been easy. The transition from childhood to adulthood has been continually extended in some ways and contracted in others in the twentieth century. On the one hand, the chronological age for attaining legal majority has been lowered almost everywhere. Voting rights, military service, the purchase of alcohol can, for instance, occur at a younger age. Entitlement to contraceptive devices and abortion without parental consent has been extended in some countries to teenagers before the age of majority. On the other hand, young people leave their parents' homes later, stay in school longer, enter the labour market later, and have children later. Moreover, while all young people have in some ways been affected by these changes, differences among Member countries and by class and gender within countries remain great. Some young people leave school before reaching the limits of compulsory schooling; others are in the education system continuously until age 30. Many young people are economically independent of their parents by the time they are 18. Others remain dependent for another decade.

Rather than try to establish strict limits to the concept of youth by using biological, educational, labour market or psychological criteria, we have taken a flexible view and adopted ages 14 and 25 as our parameters. In such a survey as this the important thing is to capture the precise moment in life (which varies a lot individually) when factors of education, work, gender and familial identity come most strongly into the forefront.

We have assumed a similar flexibility with the concept of attitudes which has been construed to embrace a broad range of things young people say they believe, value, or have opinions about. Terms like attitudes, beliefs, values, opinions, or perceptions have thus been used interchangeably.

The Appendix gives details of the methodology of the project, the kind of data used, the countries covered and the limitations inherent in any analytical programme of this kind. Attitude surveys have been considered alongside, sometimes contrasted with, statistical data on education and labour market participation or research findings in the field of individual development. Finally, official texts on policies and programmes have been brought to bear on the resulting picture of young people's needs and demands as defined by themselves. These demands, in spite of their apparent clarity, translate badly into policy terms and their meaning varies greatly between different social groups within and between countries.

Analysis of such data enabled elaboration of the project's two-fold terms of reference into a set of broadly ranging questions that, in fact, serve to identify the major issues that emerged in the course of the study. A list of these will give a foretaste of the text that follows:

- Why has the concern with youth and the relationships of youth to family, education and work become so prominent in the last decade?

- Is this concern likely to grow in the 1980s? Why is it important (if it is important) to know what young people think about their relationship to social institutions?

- What are young people's feelings about what they already have in terms of education and employment opportunities and what they claim they ought to have?

- What are the limitations of young people's perceptions?

- What are the structural conditions that produce their perceptions about work and education? In what ways do families, socialisation, social class and gender, educational institutions and labour market experiences shape these perceptions?

- How do these perceptions differ by groups? To what extent can and should youth be treated as a common category across Member nations or as a category divided by national, class, racial and gender differences?

- What kind of trade-off can society expect by acceding or not acceding to the declared needs of the young?

- What are the values society holds about the benefits that should come to all youth from the education system, from work, and from the conditions of family and social life?

To answer these questions, it has been necessary to look at youth not only as a common group, but to stress the distinctions among different categories of youth. The under-achievers, the school failures and the early leavers, are at the forefront of the analysis, but the report also looks at more highly educated young people and at girls caught up in the social changes surrounding gender roles.

Principal among those who have contributed to the quality of this report are the experts and administrators from participating Member countries, who have contributed to the project with topical papers and, more informally, in facilitating the Secretariat access to a number of national studies.

Among these, special acknowledgement must be made to Professors John Egglestor., University of Keele, Ulf Lundgren, University of Stockholm, Dr. Luisa La Malfa, Italian Ministry of Education who acted as main consultants since the beginning of the project. Dr. Rona Petersen, Danish Ministry of Education and Ms. Margareta Vestin, Expert with the Swedish Parliamentary Commission on Secondary Education deserve particular thanks for their painstaking research and analysis of their countries' publications. Professor Marvin Lazerson, University of British Columbia, is especially acknowledged for his expert contribution as well as for his editorial advice on an earlier version of this report.

Chapter I

YOUNG PEOPLE AS A SOCIAL ENTITY

It is always important to watch out for pitfalls when assessing the condition of young people. Judgements necessarily remain incomplete and uncertain. No sooner does an idea take shape than it is out of date because every problem is constantly revealing new facets. This is due to the basic interaction between the situation in which young people find themselves and overall social change.(1)

Any society in which tradition becomes sacred is condemned to stagnation, but a society which tries continually to revolt against tradition is condemned to destruction. Societies conceive the twin spirits of conservatism and revolution. Both are necessary, but they can only survive in a state of conflict without coming to a reconciliation. This inherent division of creative development often divides along the lines of the gap between generations.(2)

1. THE DEMOGRAPHY OF YOUTH

In the mid-1970s the number of young people aged 15-24 in OECD countries was more than 114 million - 16 per cent of the total population(3). Since then,the number and proportion has been growing to the extent that, by the mid-1980s, they will amount to over 17 per cent of the total population. There are, of course, variations by country. In the mid-70s, 15-24 year-olds in Germany and Austria accounted for the smallest proportion of the population (around 14 per cent), while the proportions were highest in Canada (over 19 per cent), the United States (18.6 per cent), and Turkey (18.5 per cent).

What these young people are doing varies - by country, by age, by social class, by gender. A 15-year-old male or female in an OECD country is overwhelmingly likely to be in school. By age 18, the changes are dramatic. In Switzerland, Denmark, the United States, Norway and Japan between 64 and 44 per cent of young

people were in school in the late 1970s. In Greece, France, Spain, Portugal the percentage was about 34; in New Zealand it was 18(4).

When young people leave school, by far the majority enter the labour market, but their chances of obtaining employment vary. Those under 19 face unemployment statistics of between as much as a 25 per cent unemployment rate, as in France or the United Kingdom, and about 4 per cent, as in Germany or Japan; those over 20 have a much lower risk of unemployment. Racial minorities fare worse at every age. In the United States, unemployment may go as high as 50 per cent for black youngsters; similar figures can be found for minority youth in the United Kingdom or in Australia. In some countries it seems that girls find slightly better employment opportunities than boys but these data are usually suspect since in many OECD countries young women do not admit to actively looking for paid jobs or are employed outside the labour market in the home.

These data show that the experiences of young people are both common and dissimilar. Almost all go to school to the age of compulsion, but many leave later - at different times and with different results. Almost all get a job by 25 but the likelihood of unemployment varies by age of school leaving, social class, race and, to a lesser extent, gender.

2. YOUTH AS A RECOGNISED GROUP IN SOCIETY

Young people have, of course, always been a subject of concern; but formal recognition of adolescence and youth as a sharply defined stage of life requiring special attention and institutional provisions is a relatively recent phenomenon(5). It is only in the last 80 years that a special literature has grown up dealing particularly with the problems of the young. At the turn of the century the American psychologist G. Stanley Hall saw adolescence as "a new birth".

> Interest in adult life and in vocations develops. Youth awakes to a new world and understands neither it nor himself ... Character and personality are taking form, but everything is plastic. Self-feeling and ambition are increased, and every trait and faculty is liable to exaggeration and excess(6).

The perceptions of youth as a period of Sturm und Drang, a time of experimentation and preparation for adulthood, achieved widespread popularity in subsequent decades. They were reinforced by two interrelated trends that have affected every OECD country in the present century: the withholding of large numbers of young people from full-time employment and the extension of schooling.

The shift away from employment was a complicated phenomenon varying by country. The trend seems to have involved a combination of technological changes that made young people less

economically productive and modified apprenticeships, humanitarian efforts to reduce child labour, and the likelihood that higher living standards gave families more flexibility in putting their children to work.

The shift away from employment was also a shift toward more schooling. The initial phase was the passage of compulsory school attendance legislation, but even more striking, especially after World War II, were the growing numbers of young people who stayed in school beyond the age of compulsion. Again, tremendous variation by country existed. In 1950 the enrolment rates during the first year of non-compulsory schooling in Japan was about 40 per cent, in 1975 it was over 90 per cent. In Denmark and France, similar major increases from about 30 to 75 per cent and 50 to 71 per cent respectively, have taken place over the same period. In the United States and Canada, the 1950 enrolment rates at the beginning of the non-compulsory cycle were already as high as 80 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively. Only slight increases have occurred since. But in all countries the trend was the same. Young people had accepted schooling as a major road into the occupational structure and adulthood.

Thus, in less than 100 years, a new social entity had been created: the adolescent, youth, the not-yet-adult, whose age limits cover at least a decade of an individual life. Increasingly, these young people have been separated physically, economically and emotionally from younger and older population groups; in particular, they have become associated with a specialised institution - the school - which is now pivotal in defining their status, and in determining the road into the occupational structure and their future roles as adults. Pushed by legal constraints, by interest, or by vocational necessity, youth came to schools in great numbers. They and their families accepted the extended presence of school in their lives for what they perceived school to embody: a social contract whereby, in exchange for their time, effort and good conduct, they would gain a place, possibly a better one, in the society that had value to them. The result is that the school became the only common institution for most young people.

3. THE DILEMMAS OF YOUTH

Just tell me, how old do I have to be to get into the human race? - a 16 year old, United States(7).

Children should be buried at age 12 and dug up at age 18 - a mother, Spain(8).

The 20th century categorisation of youth, and the creation of a special institution for young people has not come free of cost. Youth has been granted the privilege to learn without being

encumbered with the social responsibilities required to come to terms with the individual and social norms necessary to an integrated adulthood.

Most obviously, young people are caught in a kind of no-man's land, where there are neither children nor adults, but where one must be both child-like and adult-like at the same time. On the one hand, they are told to experiment and be free before the responsibilities take hold. On the other, they are chastised for being irresponsible, for not recognising the seriousness of their behaviour. They are protected and segregated, and then condemned for being overly self-centred. They are simultaneously viewed as harbingers of a new society and as junior representatives of the existing adult world.

The dilemma for young people has in part been a product of society's success in establishing youth as a separate category. The creation of physically segregated forms of schooling and the more general age segregation in modern societies have largely shut young people off from those places where infants and adults are found: the home, with fewer siblings and where more working parents are away for most of the day; the world of work, which non-workers have little access to. Not even leisure has escaped age segregation, with the youth-specific activities that have mushroomed almost everywhere.

The net result is that today's young people have to learn their adult roles as workers, as parents, as members of society by proxy, as it were, without the benefit - the hardship, some would say - of having to confront their learning with real life situations of adulthood. At the same time, the roads to adulthood have become confused. Extended schooling has lengthened the transition. Birth control practices have separated sexual activity from the responsibilities of family. Concepts of continuing education have lessened the impact of school leaving as entry into adulthood. The economic returns to schooling have become less apparent in a limited growth economy, and the rationale for staying in school has become less persuasive, even as unemployment among school leavers remains high.

Some of these confusions have always been the lot of young people, but concern about them has intensified. Despite empirical evidence that the youth movement of the 1960s did not, by itself, impose any radical and long-lasting changes on the ways our society functions, adult worries about youth have grown as young people continue to protest and as dissatisfaction with schooling and work seems to grow.

Today, the changed economic situation of the 1970s, projected into the 1980s, suggests that these dilemmas will increase. Questions of whether to let young people retain their status as not-yet-adults, to extend or lessen their years at school, to create job opportunities and to require their participation in them, and to clarify the road or roads to adulthood will remain high on the social agenda.

4. THE VALUES HELD BY YOUNG PEOPLE

What young people believe is exceedingly difficult to gauge. It is even harder to be certain about why they hold those beliefs. Yet many of the answers to the questions we have about youth and youth policy depend upon assumptions about youth values and their causes. We must, therefore, try to discover what these values are, and how they have been shaped.

a) The family

Perhaps the most striking of our findings about young people is how strongly they are committed to family life. Despite evidence of frustration about their parents' ability to understand them, the vast majority of youth seem to accept their families. Although high divorce rates, increased attention to teenage sexuality, and rhetorical statements objecting to families might seem to suggest a deep hostility, we found that young people normally tend to express positive sentiments about family life.

The young in Germany, Sweden, Austria and the United States agreed in identifying their family and their close circle of friends as the main building blocks to a satisfying adult life - indeed the primacy of their interest in the family was very high. The young Germans saw "family and children" as the top item in a 1979 list of "life perspectives"(9). When asked in a 1971 survey what they will "most of all" be doing in ten years time, 65 per cent of the Swedish upper secondary school pupils answered: "To marry, to live with a partner, to establish a family"(10). In 1979, in a similar enquiry, 15 and 16 year-olds in Sweden expressed yet higher levels of endorsement of items such as "love and sexuality" and "steady partnership"(11). Eighty per cent of the 14-24 year-olds questioned in a 1980 Austrian survey found "leading a harmonious family life" their most important objective(12), while 38 per cent of a United States study found family the most important life objective, compared with 29 per cent for the next highest category of personal relations(13). The same survey found more than 60 per cent disagreed with the statement "marriage is becoming obsolete". Working life and social success come only later in this list of life objectives at levels around and below 50 per cent.

A 1978 World Survey of Youth aged 18-24 in Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Sweden, Switzerland and Australia both illustrates and modifies this positive view of family. A large majority of the young people concerned were themselves single and lived with their parents - over 80 per cent in Japan and Switzerland; over 70 per cent in Germany, Australia and the United States; and well over 60 per cent in Sweden and the United Kingdom. Although there had been a trend toward living less with parents, and more with friends since the earlier 1972 World Survey, the 1978 figures remained high ranging from 47 per cent in Switzerland (where living with other-than parents family member seems to be frequent) to 79 per cent in Japan(14).

Cohabitation with elders was accompanied by positive opinions on the upbringing the young people received: 85-95 per cent of those surveyed answered "yes, things went well" or "things went more or less well" when asked about their life at home while growing up. When asked if they would be prepared eventually to support their elderly parents, between 80 and 95 per cent of the respondents in 7 of the countries said that they would. Only in Sweden was there substantial variation, no more than 61 per cent saying 'yes'. This may reflect the impact of the country's welfare programmes on youth's perceptions of responsibility to parents. Nowhere did more than 4 per cent indicate that in no circumstances would they support their parents.

At the same time, however, some young people in advanced industrial countries reveal frustrations with their family life. While most said they turned to their mother or father for important problems, between 15 per cent (Germany) and 32 (France) shared their important problems with neither. When asked if they had recently had real clashes with one or both parents, from 13 per cent (Sweden) to nearly 40 (Australia) admitted that this was so.

The sources of conflict are as revealing as the existence of clashes: they are not so much related to school, work, politics, religion or fundamental social values, but to matters of everyday life - such as physical appearance (clothes, hair style), spending money, staying out at night (for boys more than for girls) and relationships with the opposite sex (especially for girls). There is, in addition, a second broad area of contention, vaguely categorised as "outlook on life", in other words, what is left of one's social views after work, politics and religion have been removed.

So, if a conclusion can be drawn from these data on family life, the young people are by and large satisfied and integrated, and when conflicts arise, they are mostly power fights over standards of behaviour and general outlook on life. Indeed, many of the value conflicts appear age-specific, the values likely to be left behind as the younger generation reaches adulthood.

More specific and detailed surveys of youth in individual countries will undoubtedly sharpen these findings, but it is unlikely that they will bring about any fundamental alteration. A 1977 Italian survey of youth aged 15-24 is relevant in this respect(15). The young people there overwhelmingly (88.8 per cent) believed in the good will of their parents and their desire to understand their problems and values. Moreover, a majority believed that young people did not want to live on their own away from their families. However, 62 per cent believed that, while their parents wanted to understand them, they could not; another 8 per cent or so thought that their parents did not even try. The problem was somewhat worse for girls than boys, worse for adolescents than young adults. Those from upper class backgrounds believed their parents less capable of understanding their problems than did working class youngsters, but, in contrast,

found them more willing to try. Among upper class youth, 56 per cent wanted to live autonomously away from their families compared to 34 per cent of the working class youth.

The same Italian study produced data on the economic ties between young people and their families. Among those without an independent income, 34 per cent received no money from their families, a further 33 per cent received a little (between $8 and $34 a month) and another 20 per cent got rather more (between $35 and $60 a month). As expected, the younger children received on average less than their elders, and working class families paid out less than middle and upper class ones. At the same time, poorer class youngsters who work contribute much higher proportions of their income to their families than do their contemporaries in the upper and middle class.

Gender differences were also apparent in the Italian survey. Girls who produced no income received smaller allowances than similarly placed boys: 15 per cent of the girls between $34 and $60 a month compared with 26.5 per cent of the boys. Girls who were earning kept more of their pay for their own needs than the boys; 39.4 per cent kept 90 to 100 per cent as compared with 34 per cent of the boys.

The survey does not in itself establish a clear picture of youth's relationship to families, but it foreshadows both the sense of responsibility to parents and the aspirations for a shared family life expressed by the young people in the 1978 World Survey. At the same time it leaves no doubt that, alongside generally positive feelings about family life, there are frustrations, especially over the capacity to communicate with parents. Finally, it suggests that if we are to know more about youth's attitudes towards family life, we will have to take into account social class and gender; both play a part in shaping attitudes.

If young people continue to express high aspirations for family life, it becomes pertinent to ask what kind of relationships within families they expect. Data here are hard to come by, but at least we know something of what they expect gender relationships to be like.

The evidence is mixed. At first sight, the signs are for a generalised liberalisation within the family, a move toward gender equality. The 1978 World Survey is clear on this point. Strong disagreement was expressed by young people with the statement "Men should go out to work while women stay home and take care of the house" in seven of the eight countries (between 58.7 per cent in Germany and 85.5 per cent in Sweden). The only exception was Japan, where only 31.7 per cent of the respondents disagreed with the statement(16). Another international study has confirmed these sex-egalitarian sympathies of today's youth in Germany, the United Kingdom and France(17).

The promise of greater sex equality becomes suspect, however, on a closer analysis of nat[illegible]. Increased perceptions of gender equality have not [illegible]d to equal participation in adult chores in France, Germany or the United Kingdom. Most of the respondents in these countries agree that today's girls share with their household partner the burden of earning a living (53 per cent to 72 per cent of respondents), but they are unwilling to extend sex equality to other tasks. Men are not expected to be responsible for cooking, cleaning and child raising which are still viewed as women's work by more than half of the young respondents, or at best, might be shared by both partners. The inverse situation occurs for gardening and repair work around the house; they are the man's responsibility, at best to be shared by both.

The survival of sex stereotypes in the division of labour within the household is not, however, limited to these three countries. A recent Swedish study reveals that in 80 per cent of the homes where both spouses work full-time "the women answered for all the laundry, in 70 per cent of the cases for all food preparation, in 55 per cent for all cleaning, in 53 per cent for all the shopping and 50 per cent for all the dishwashing"(18).

Responses as these do not reflect simple male versus female differences. The 1978 World Survey warns us that more girls than boys agreed with the statement "Men should go out to work while women stay home and take care of the house". It also reveals that youth in all eight countries divided along educational backgrounds, with young people still in school expressing more egalitarian views than those having already left the education system, and by socio-economic status, with blue-collar workers more traditional than their white-collar contemporaries(19).

A United States study in 1973 reveals much the same differences: youth with less education were less supportive of egalitarian gender statements(20). If differences in opinion expressed by non-college as compared to college women are contrasted with the differences in opinion between the total population of college and non-college youth, the inclusion of male respondents does not alter the gap by more than a very few percentage points. Without jumping to overly quick conclusions, it seems that the willingness to endorse equality between the sexes does not itself rest on gender differences alone. Not all women identify with the "exploited half", not all men are in favour of keeping the sexes in their traditional places. Sex stereotypes seem to have deep roots in class-dependent cultural values.

b) Political and social institutions

Commitment to one's country is valued by most young people but the strength of allegiance seems to vary considerably by country. It is certainly less compelling than commitment to family. There are, too, warnings that youth's relationships to political institutions are being tested. While most are patriotic they

nonetheless say they are unwilling to sacrifice themselves for their country; they hold themselves apart from the political process, manifesting instead a high commitment to peers and self-centred activities. If they are not rejecting their country's political and social institutions en masse, today's young people are certainly not inspired by them.

The youth protests of the 1960s and later have convinced many adults that young people are at war with basic social values. To some extent, attitudinal surveys in the early 1970s reinforced this perception. Between 1969 and 1973, surveys of young Americans aged 16-25 indicated that patriotism, one of the pillars of a country's stability, had declined as a "very important personal value", falling from a none too high 35 per cent among college youth in 1969 to a mere 19 per cent in 1973. Although the extent of change was less severe among non-college youth, here too there was a falling away from traditional standards (from 61 per cent to 40).

This trend was somewhat misleading, however, being an immediate product of the intense politics of the Vietnam War. By 1978, Americans aged between 18 and 24 were responding enthusiastically to questions about their patriotism: 95 per cent claimed they were proud of their country, 80 per cent that they wanted to do something to serve it, and 54 per cent were willing to go as far as sacrificing their own interests in the interest of the United States(21).

Among the eight countries surveyed in the World Youth Survey, none expressed as much patriotic sentiment as the United States. The Australians (90 per cent), the British (83) and the Japanese (70 per cent) were next highest in expressing pride in country. The French (62 per cent), the Swiss (60) and the Swedes (60 per cent) group together, while German youth (56 per cent) was the least positive in this respect.

The expression of pride in country thus varies; certainly when it begins to apply to little more than half the youth surveyed there is cause for concern. Even more telling are the low proportions of young people willing to sacrifice their own interests in the interests of their home country: from highs of 54 per cent (United States), 35 per cent (Australia) and 30 (Sweden) to lows of 9 (Japan), 10 (France) and 13 per cent (Switzerland). While a coherence of intention is found among young Americans, the seemingly highly patriotic Japanese show little interest in putting aside their own concerns to benefit their country. On the other hand, the moderate pride in country expressed by young Swedes does not seem to prevent them from a willingness to sacrifice if it came to a point.

The considerable variation in patriotism is broadly reflected in answers to explicit questions about satisfaction or dissatisfaction with "the way things are in the country". The least satisfied were the French, of whom 63 per cent were either "more or less dissatisfied" or "dissatisfied". They were closely

followed by the Japanese and the British. In contrast, only 16 per cent of German and 18 per cent of Swiss youth expressed dissatisfaction.

Despite these variations, the specific issues that generate the most dissatisfaction are common across the eight countries: destruction of the environment (indicated also in a 1979 German youth survey)(22); social inequalities stemming from wealth or family background; inadequate social welfare for the elderly or the handicapped; and the feeling that hard work does not get much recognition.

These dissatisfactions do not, however, seem to be accompanied by strong desires to engage in violent or illegal activity to set things right. At most, there is a tendency to shift from forms of legal action which defer responsibilities (e.g. voting) to other forms, still legal, such as petitions, demonstrations or strikes, where individuals take it upon themselves to make their opinions known.

The previously cited Italian survey also showed that the 15-24 year-olds had little interest in politics - even in a country where participation rates in elections are traditionally very high. Very few of them are actively engaged in this area (11 per cent of the boys and 5 per cent of the girls), about half of them "just keep up with what happens". One third of the respondents declared they were frankly not interested in politics - were even disgusted with them, the girls (42 per cent) showing less interest than the boys (31 per cent)(23).

The Italian survey adds a further dimension to the limited youth involvement in politics: it is to some extent gender-based, but even more it is class-based. Young working class people are the least interested in politics, 50 per cent of them claiming to be "non-interested" or "repelled" as compared to 31 per cent of middle class youth and 20 per cent in the upper classes.

Yet other enquiries bear out the conclusion that differences in the degree of political interest stem from the social characteristics of the respondents. A 1980 Austrian study of young people aged 14-24(24) shows occupational status and level of education (the latter more than the former) are telling indicators of interest in politics, lack of interest being most common among youngsters with the lowest levels of education, apprentices and young blue-collar workers. A similar relationship between interest in politics - rather low on average - and education is found in Switzerland. Here, in a study of young recruits, it was found that among a minority who expressed an interest in politics, it is the above-average school achievers or those who liked going to school who were the more interested (an average of 38 per cent as against 21 per cent of those who had achieved least or attended classes reluctantly)(25). Within the minority, the greatest interest was shown by those youngsters whose sympathies and experience ranged beyond their own immediate localities.

This basic pattern of detachment from politics, or at best a tepid interest in them, is confirmed once again by an international study covering 12 to 23 year-olds in Germany, France and the United Kingdom(26). But the data there suggest also that levels of interest are closely related to age: as the young grow older, they express more interest or, perhaps more accurately, less uninterest in politics. There is a trend towards some personal commitment among the 17-23 year-olds, although in the United Kingdom even they show very low levels of interest in political activity when compared with the French or Germans at any age level.

As we have already seen, modest participation in political matters does not necessarily mean active hostility toward the established authorities. Young people tend to view their country positively, and most seem willing to contain their dissatisfactions within legal boundaries. They are not prepared to challenge the State - indeed most of them recognise it as the institution charged with the provision of people's basic needs. If dissatisfaction is expressed about persisting social inequalities or inadequate welfare, this is because there is "somebody" to blame, somebody who is perceived as responsible for delivering the services. The young Americans surveyed in 1973 clearly indicated what they felt people were entitled to, whether they themselves could afford it or not: medical care, education, secure retirement were viewed as rights(27). Similarly, young people in Austria in 1980 put "social security" at the top of the list of the functions of the State(28). Those at work stressed this in even greater numbers than those at school (71 per cent of the former against 61 per cent of the latter).

Attachment to one's own country and belief in the responsibility of the State to provide social welfare do not, however, overcome the disinclination of young people to participate in politics. In fact, they clearly prefer other alternatives: most of their non-school, non-work time they spend resting, relaxing, reading or listening to music, attending movies or sporting events, gardening or doing handiwork or wandering around commercial centres. Many of them take part in sports, and this seems to be one of the very few "creative"(29) activities in which they engage. Very few in the 1978 World Survey appeared to contribute any of their free time to improving society. Between 24 per cent (France) and 56 per cent (Japan) of the young people in the Survey said that their weekend time was usually spent in "relaxation - watching television - or looking at movies", while a large proportion do "nothing in particular, just lie around taking it easy, go wandering about, sleep, and so on". The 1977 Italian survey revealed that almost 57 per cent of the respondents "engage in no activities during their free time"(30). Young people there take part in sports to much the same extent as their peers elsewhere, boys (not surprisingly) being more active than girls in this respect (36 per cent as against 11).

Occupational status (employed, unemployed, non-employed) seems to influence participation in free-time activities, with the employed being slightly less inactive than the non-employed

(49 per cent among the former as compared to 53 per cent among the latter). Unemployed youth seem to be even more inactive; 58 per cent declare they have no particular interest in other activities besides school or work.

In Sweden and Denmark boys take more part in sports than girls (50 per cent of Swedish boys, 30 per cent of the girls) with the participation rate decreasing with increasing age. For Swedish girls, the decline is from 38 per cent of the 13-15 year-olds to only 20 per cent of the 20-24 year-olds. A similar decrease in participation, from once a week to once a month on average, is found among Danish girls as between the 7th and 9th grades. For the Danish boys in the same grades, the ratio goes from three times a week to once a week. In France, Germany and the United Kingdom comparable decreases in sports activities are observed amongst boys and girls of different ages with an average of between 50 per cent and 58 per cent of the 12-13 year-old age group, and an average of 38 per cent to 48 per cent for the older 17-18 year-old age group in the three countries(31).

As clearly observed, apart from sports, the free-time of the young people in the countries surveyed seemed largely to be spent on consumer activities such as the cinema, discos and the like. Percentages as high as 90 are found for the incidence of these among young Swedes between 13 and 24 years of age. Values between 50 and 70 per cent are found among youngsters interviewed in France, the United Kingdom and Germany. Furthermore, whenever sex differences are measured, as in the Italian and the Danish studies, the same pattern emerges: it is the boys who show the greater outside activity, while the girls prefer to stay at home.

c) Looking forward to adult life

The apparent indifference of young people today towards active participation in socially relevant issues and their preoccupation with self-expression within their own circle show up once again in their stated life objectives.

The 18 to 24 year-olds interviewed in the 1978 Survey clearly indicate that their main goal in life is to live as they intend(32). With the exception of the Japanese, who expressed a second-best interest in getting rich, all the youngsters showed very little interest either in money per se, in social status, or in working on behalf of society, the rates being 11 per cent, 17 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively.

"To live as I like" seems to mean two things: achieving a satisfactory family life and gaining some economic and social success. As we have seen, German, Swedish, Austrian and American adolescents place a high degree of dependence on the belief that strong and harmonious family ties are essential to a satisfactory adulthood. Whatever the spectre raised by youth unrest and women's liberation, it is clear that most young people look forward to a family life of their own.

This high interest in family life is not just a verbal expression: as soon as they are free from school many young people are starting to get married. But again, there are variations by gender and social class. Italian girls, for example, early school leavers and working-class youth are much more likely to be married than their opposites(33). In the United States young people who have not been to college are twice as likely to get married and almost three times as likely to have children than those who have(34).

If a fulfilling family life is one measure of what "to live as I like" means, another is becoming economically and socially successful. Here again most young people express traditional values. When asked to choose among determinants of success, "personal effort" and "personal abilities" are ranked highest by youth in the World Survey, at levels of between 48 per cent and 77 per cent. Third on the list is "good education", with sharp national differences, however. While 35 to 48 per cent of the youth in Sweden, the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and Switzerland regard education as a determinant of success, only 19 per cent in France, 14 per cent in Japan, and 11 per cent in Germany agree with this view - indeed, in these countries, "luck or fate" are believed to have a stronger influence on success later in life(35).

Young people in Austria rank hard work and individual capabilities very high as determinants of success - in both cases higher than the general population rates them. Unlike their peers in the World Survey, however, they believe "higher" education to be the most important determinant of social advancement(36).

d) Views on education

The advice I give is never think that school isn't important. School can make you or break you in future life - An adolescent girl, clerical officer in the civil service, Scotland(37)

Virtually no country survey of young people's attitudes reveals a rejection of education. Most young people want to learn; they value education and believe that it will better their lives. In many cases their expectations of what schools ought to do are pitched pretty high.

Austrian 14 and 15 year-olds, who appear among the most positive on the importance of education, overwhelmingly believe that schools should inculcate independence at work, assertiveness, diligence and co-operation(38); young people in the United States who have not been to college believe that their limited educational background is the most serious obstacle in the way of a desirable job(39). In a Canadian sample, there is little doubt about the school's importance in shaping occupational futures(40).

These observations are about what the school ought to be or do. Young people are highly critical, however, of what actually happens there. Among the young Australians already cited, 87 per cent think that schools ought to teach assertiveness: 31 per cent believe it is actually taught. Between 79 and 86 per cent feel that occupational knowledge ought to be taught: 33 to 43 per cent think that in fact it is. Only 64 per cent think that obedience toward superiors should be taught, but 73 per cent say it is - this becomes, then, the only area where the school exceeds the pupils' expectations!

Similar opinions are expressed by 17 and 18 year-olds in Germany, France and the United Kingdom where more than 40 per cent of the respondents feel that schools teach order, discipline and obedience effectively, while less than 15 per cent saw them achieving the same success in imparting trust and respect for others and independence(41).

Young people are especially critical of the relationship between school and work. They believe that schools are divorced from "life" and "life's occupations", and that they are mostly concerned with the next level of education. Secondary school-leavers, therefore, get short shrift. As an Italian National Youth Survey reported, "school precedes work; it doesn't introduce it"(42).

The concern that schooling should prepare for occupational roles is widespread among young people. In the 1977 Italian survey, this was the function of schooling that received the most support. Ninety per cent of the upper secondary school pupils recently surveyed in Sweden believe that more practical periods are needed in their curriculum(43). Thirty-nine per cent of them add that they would rather have a job than go on to upper secondary level; 25 per cent are ready to leave school if offered a job.

Substantially similar evidence comes from Australia. When young people there were asked to identify those things most highly valued by schools, 71 per cent listed academic qualification, preparation for a job, and basic learning skills as the main priorities. The school's emphasis on academic results was particularly criticized by many of these youngsters(44). Surveying a small group of Danish 16-year-olds reinforces these findings: "Seen from the young people's point of view, the school functions satisfactorily on the whole until the sixth, seventh and eighth forms when it becomes less meaningful"(45). Similarly, in Canada, a group of recent secondary school graduates complain that their schooling provided little preparation for work(46).

For large numbers of young people, then, school is an isolated world where you learn nothing about real life. A Swedish boy articulated the view of countless others when he said:

I think people should go to school for years and then try working. Then you should be allowed to carry on with school if you want to, or else leave. I think this is a good thing, because then you know what you are letting yourself in for. I found out what it is like having a job. I was never told about it in school.(47)

There is a second feature in the education system at which young people commonly express dissatisfaction, namely the discriminatory ways in which teachers behave toward pupils of different proficiency. Here are the feelings of two young Scots on the subject. First, a boy who was an early school leaver and is now a Venetian blind fitter(48):

After my second year at school my class was just thrown aside as we did not qualify for O levels. So it was just a case of "to hell with you". In my opinion this was to push the O level pupils on. And from third year on it was part-time education. We could sit in an arithmetic class and end up writing a stupid essay because the arithmetic teacher had to take an O level class while we had a P.E. teacher.

As for guidance we sometimes got the odd film but usually ended up playing football or some other game, because the teacher was too busy. The last year-and-a-half of school was made up most of metal work, woodwork, P.E. and art. We would go into school in the morning and get sent home two hours later. Out of all the last year-and-a-half you could have put what we were taught into three months.

The same conclusion, but from a different background, was expressed by a girl who went on to study social sciences at university in these words(49):

Although I realise what the teacher has to cope with, each teacher could be more concerned with the pupil rather than the pupil's attainments, detract from what she teaches or from what is being learned. Most of our teachers concentrated on bright pupils - encouraging them - which is wrong because bright people get on fine without help, while the less able pupils get moved into a lower non-certificate class and the attitude was, "we only have to put up with them until they reach S.L.A., we'll just have to keep them occupied until then", with no care about preparing them for life outside school in any way.

The primacy teachers place on pupils who have a liking for school seems to be equally strong in Australia where several studies have consistently shown how often young people complain about "the lack of attention to the needs of personal development and the impersonal nature of relationships within the school". Respondents to surveys list such characteristics as lack of sympathy, arrogance, lack of interest, paternalism, patronage, apathy and hostility as illustrations of this. This atmosphere

is particularly evident in the junior years at secondary level where the students report that extra effort on the part of school is reserved for those who are believed to be able to "make it" to year twelve. The last years of compulsory schooling in Australia have been described as school at its worst, with sheer overcrowding, impersonality and authoritarian reaction to student restlessness(50).

A recent Italian study(51) similarly reports "difficult relationships with teachers" as one of the principal motivations of youngsters who had dropped out of upper secondary education (58 per cent of respondents) - the third best reason, coming after "no interest in studying" (61 per cent) and "no interest in schools" (54 per cent). All other reasons for leaving early (need to earn a living, employment offered, or school achievement) are given with much lower frequencies, below 35 per cent by all respondents. Similar complaints about experiences at school come from Australia(52), Denmark(53), and Scotland(54). A Swedish adolescent sums up the position in the words "teachers have to understand that young people cannot be interested in all that stuff that not even adults are interested in"(55).

The frustration young people feel about the education system is pervasive. The irony is that it is, at least partially, of the schools' own making. In the eyes of many young people the formal education system, by increasingly presenting itself as an institution of many promises, has produced its own ills. Had the school not promised social mobility, failure to provide it might be less dissatisfying. Were better jobs not promised in return for extended schooling, less disappointment would be voiced when they failed to materialise. Had schools not come to occupy so much time in young people's lives, there would be far less prolonged worry about the quality of school life, the "pain" and "shame" that for some are inseparable from it, and about unsatisfactory relationships with teachers.

All this said, however, there is no escaping the fact that whether young people view the school in negative or in positive terms, reject or welcome participation in it, the school and the teachers form the main context within which the life chances of most of them start to unfold.

e) Views on work

Young people's attitudes toward work are, again, mixed. Fears that they are rejecting the "work ethic" do not seem well founded. Most of them view work as a normal and necessary part of adulthood. For Belgian youth, for example, it is necessary as part of one's role in society: "To have a job is an imperative in life. No society not based on work can survive. Furthermore, you must have a job not only for financial reasons but also in order to communicate with other people and to play a role in society(56). For an Australian 16-year-old it is a source of dignity: "There's practically no jobs in this town, only seasonal

work at the Abattoirs. I'll try for a job there. If I don't get one I'll have to keep going West. I'll get a job somehow. No, I won't go on the dole, no matter what happens"(57).

These views are not atypical. Every survey we have analysed of young people's attitudes toward work shows occupational success and satisfaction high on the list of goals for adulthood. A recent one in Australia established a number of relevant points: a large proportion of young people, two-thirds to 70 per cent, said they would work even if they did not have to; there was no evidence that unemployed workers took advantage of the system, many did not claim benefits due to them, and the availability of unemployment benefits did not discourage people from work; the work values or desired job characteristics of students were not significantly different from those held by a comparable sample of young people in the work force. The study(58) concludes:

> Although the work ethic meant slightly different things to different people its influence was strong. All young people wanted a job badly and work was the activity that students expected to take part in when they left school. One of the main reasons young people put forward for having to have a job was that work provided people with the money to do other things. Nevertheless those in jobs reported that the aspects of their job that were most important to their job satisfaction were social factors and interpersonal relationships. Employers' perceptions of what contributed to young people's job satisfaction were not very different to their own.

Even the widely held view (so often put forward as justification for not hiring young people) that young people are restless, easily abandon jobs when dissatisfied, and have unrealistically high demands for the quality of working life, is misleading. It seems that most young people are no less ready than their more "steady" and "reliable" elders to accept and even be reasonably satisfied with whatever job opportunities they do get.

The 1978 World Youth Survey shows that the large majority interviewed were either "satisfied" or "more or less satisfied" with their current full-time job(59). Positive feelings about their jobs were expressed in the 80-90 per cent range with only two exceptions: France, where 24 per cent of the respondents were either "dissatisfied" or "more or less dissatisfied" with their occupation, and Japan, where an even larger proportion of young people (32 per cent) expressed similar negative sentiments. Attachment to a specific job is reflected concretely in the limited turnover rate of these youngsters in the year preceding the survey. About half of them in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Switzerland, Sweden and Australia had never changed their job, and among the Japanese 71 per cent had remained in their original job, notwithstanding their high levels of expressed dissatisfaction. Only the young Americans showed levels of job turnover well above average.

Many of the respondents were sufficiently satisfied to declare a willingness to continue in their present job. About a quarter said they would change, but only "if the opportunity arises". Less than 10 per cent - with the only exception, the 23 per cent of young Japanese - manifest a desire to change, but do not expect to do so. Those determined to change their current job are a minority, with the highest proportions in Switzerland (19 per cent), France (18 per cent), and the United States (16 per cent), with the lowest in Germany (7 per cent) and Japan (4 per cent).

In light of these data it is no great surprise to find that in yet another OECD country, Italy, the "refusal of work" (a youth attitude frequently cited) seems in fact to be a very limited phenomenon(60). Only 15 per cent of those between 15 and 24 say they have ever refused a job. Almost 70 per cent declare a willingness to remain in the job they currently hold. Among those at work, interest in the job seems to be much more important than the pay (37 per cent as against 19 per cent). Interestingly, among those who are neither in school nor at work (74 per cent were girls), the highest reported incidence of job refusal was due to low pay (29 per cent) rather than lack of job interest (18 per cent), suggesting that only a strong financial incentive could make these youngsters change their out-of-work condition.

Given such strong evidence to the contrary one may well ask why the public belief that young people do not want to work is so strong. One key to the answer may be to distinguish between their views of work and their attitudes towards the specific tasks in specific jobs. Today's young people seem to consider a good job as one that is interesting, secure, well paying and, perhaps most of all, allows for the development of individual skills and abilities. These were among the stated requirements of young United States blue-collar workers surveyed in 1973. They ranked as the most important attributes of a job: "work interesting" (at the 66 per cent level), "good pay" (at 65 per cent), and "chances to develop one's abilities" (at the 57 per cent). The same sample rated at the 57 per cent level "economic security" as its main priority for the future. This figure compared well with the 58 per cent endorsement rate found among youth enrolled in college(61).

Similar evidence comes from Denmark where a 1974 survey of vocational preferences and vocational expectations among all pupils in their 8th year of school in a mid-Jutland market town found that the young people were more critical and dissatisfied than older people with their work possibilities(62). The difference between how people would like their work to be and how it actually is was more marked among the young than their elders. The youngsters believed it "important" or "very important" that one's job should be exciting and challenging (85 per cent of the respondents), even if the pay was not that good (76 per cent). A job should allow the development of one's competencies (75 per cent), and it should provide security; 91 per cent would choose a job where unemployment is not too high.

The same triple image of a "good" job - offering the opportunity to develop one's abilities as well as security and good pay - was in the minds of the young people participating in the 1978 World Survey(63). While they clearly wanted individual satisfaction, individualism should not be read as laziness. In all eight countries "short working hours" was the second least important factor they would consider when deciding how good a job is.

If there are criticisms of jobs and a desire to develop one's talents, good pay and security, most young people, as we have seen, are satisfied with their work or look forward to satisfactory work opportunities in the future. We have already given percentage figures supporting this observation (in all but two cases very high) but nowhere do they reach 100. The balance must, of course, include those who are dissatisfied - either more or less. Though far less numerous, these variants should not be put out of mind. Another point of relevance in this general connection is that, overall, 50 per cent or more of those questioned in the survey found greater satisfaction in their lives outside the job than in the job.

Even more disturbing are the sizeable minority who seem to have few, if any, positive values. Among German youth, 30 per cent say they will do their best to escape work pressure, and 10 per cent say they see no purpose in life(64). When asked in 1971 about their hopes for life ten years hence, 32 per cent of upper secondary school pupils in Sweden hoped to rest and take it easy, and 21 per cent looked forward to a good life - to eat, drink and love(65). Still in Sweden, eight years later; about 13 per cent of the 15 and 16 year-olds interviewed indicated in "drugs and alcohol" their preferred gateway to "making one's life richer"(66). These views should be taken seriously. They represent a minority but nevertheless they exist.

It is important here to recognise that the attitudes of young people may not be dramatically different from those of the adults around them. When, for example, Australian school leavers were asked to list a hierarchy of desirable occupations, it was found that their "personal occupational preferences are overwhelmingly consistent with the occupational prestige orderings in the adult culture"(67, 68).

Further evidence of similarity in defining a desirable occupation as between young people and their elders comes from Austria. While adult employees stress monetary and security aspects of jobs and the working climate, and the young place more emphasis on career prospects and personal self-development, nevertheless both groups think alike about what a decent job should offer(69).

As to changes over the last decade which has been marked by dwindling job opportunities, it does not appear that young people have become more openly defiant or critical of the employment available: rather the opposite. The repeated survey of American college youth between 1970 and 1973 illustrates this(70). While

job-related values traditional to white-collar workers such as "ability to express oneself", "challenge of the job" or "chances to get ahead" were found to have increased slightly, a much higher rise was found in options for values more traditionally associated with the working class such as "economic security" and "money you can earn" (endorsements for these increased by 76 and 69 per cent respectively over the three years).

Nor was this change in attitudes confined to the older age bracket. In 1979, 90 per cent of Danish 8th grade pupils named "absence of unemployment in that particular trade" as a major criterion for choosing a job(71). A comparison of 15 year-olds in Sweden between 1968 and 1978 revealed that job expectations had lowered - although boys persisted in being more ambitious than girls(72). Furthermore, while the definitions of high status jobs had not changed, attitudes of acceptance towards lower status occupations noticeably improved. Along with these changed expectations went a realisation that existing jobs offered less opportunities for self-determination in 1978 than they did a decade earlier.

Two similar surveys in Germany in 1973 and 1979 also showed an enhanced concern with job security: more than 70 per cent of the youth surveyed in 1979 as compared to 50 per cent in 1973 stressed its importance(73). Again, in Belgium, a survey in 1968 revealed some reluctance among the young unemployed to accept any kind of job. The resistance was found to be the more substantial the larger the perceived mismatch between the job requirements and the youth's own qualifications. The girls exhibited this unwillingness more often than the boys. In 1977, however, the picture was quite different. Everybody's ambitions had lowered: 69 per cent of the unemployed boys and 40 per cent of the unemployed girls declared their readiness to accept any job. Among those who still resisted, an unwillingness to surrender aspirations persisted. The young women still required their future job to correspond better to their qualifications. The young men in contrast stressed unpleasantness and low pay as reasons to turn one down(74).

Whatever changes may have occurred on the abstract plane in young people's approach to adult working life, their reaction to today's scene reveals realism rather than illusion. Most them appreciate the difficulty of the economic situation and their attitudes are tempered accordingly. Yet they may be over-reacting to the incessant, gloomy picture of unemployment by too readily lowering their sights and taking the first likely job that comes along in order to get some security. Many, of course, especially those with educational qualifications, will not in fact experience unemployment.

Before leaving this topic we should perhaps be permitted to repeat one of the more important findings of the present enquiry, namely that evidence drawn directly from young people in eight OECD countries does not confirm the widespread public belief that their attitude to work is largely one of rejection.

5. EMERGING TRENDS AND ISSUES

> The peaceable behaviour of most young people is not sufficient grounds for assuming that inside they feel calm and contented ... The young twenty-year-olds of today grew up in a period of economic prosperity (the sixties and the early seventies) when every goal seemed to be within reach. This feeling that the future would bring almost unlimited economic prosperity was associated by young people with other aspects of life. But then came the recession at the very moment when they were about to enter adulthood and working-life. This limited their freedom in choosing a career and the loss of complete material security and, as a consequence, shook the very foundations of the notion of individual planning and control over his or her future, to which our society attaches even more importance than in the past(75).

> *I am tired of hearing that the hope of my country lies in my generation. If you give me the same indoctrination...how can you expect me to be any different from you?* - Girl, 15 years old, United Kingdom(76).

At the end of the 1970s, a number of societal models were designed to anticipate the essential characteristics of the forthcoming decades. They defined themselves in different terms - "post-industrial", "post-modern", "post-standardised", or "post-materialist" - and differed in points of focus and implications. But they each shared two important assumptions: whatever is changing in western societies "represents a significant shift", great enough to be referred to in terms of "revolution" and "crisis"(77), and they reserve a special place for the younger generation. It is mostly through the young, the authors say, that the new forces shaping the social scenarios make themselves visible; it is mainly the young who make explicit and act on the new values.

While it is not within the remit of this report to discuss the validity of these models - this has been done extensively elsewhere(75) - it seems appropriate at least to examine the extent to which the data we have just been considering reflect the essential characteristics these models attribute to the young people of today.

Fulfilment and enhancement of the self are seen by Bell(78) as the cultural trademark of the post-industrial society with consequences ranging from rampant individualism to detachment from earthly concerns toward more spiritual interests(79). The acquisition of post-materialist values such as concerns with self-actualisation and the quality of one's life are also indicated by Inglehart as the sign, most visible among youth, of the new "silent revolution". Similarly Toffler sees in youth's sympathies for new patterns of work and non-work time one of the

signs of major shifts in the social structure and in the culture that will eventually lead to widespread decentralisation and participation at the local level(80). Increased participation is also seen by Dahrendorf as a hallmark of the new society, together with increased concern for the environment that conflicts at times with the drive towards technological and scientific development(81). Some writers have even attempted to quantify the new traits among youth(82). About 20 per cent of the 15-25 age group - the "free runners" - will dissent strongly from their parents on social and political issues, will fight consumerism and favour activities of self-expression and the arts. A majority (60 per cent) - the "practically oriented" - will rather endorse traditional values such as productivity and materialism, achievement, and be in favour of "law and order". The remaining tail (20 per cent) of the young generation will be amorphous, less educated and less articulate. They are "the left outs".

To what extent are these varying traits perceptible in the data discussed so far? Most of today's youth seem indeed to be concerned with safeguarding the environment and the possible ill effects of technological progress. They show a high degree of preoccupation with social inequalities and differences in privilege. Their expressed discontent, however, does not seem to be matched by an equally strong desire to intervene personally in putting things right: not many young people seem willing to engage in any activities that might go against their own interests. A lot think it is the job of the professional politicians to take care of political matters - dubious as they are about politics. They want to live as they like, and it is around self-centred objectives that they build their lives.

Our data show that, by and large, young people endorse work and that some of their demands on working life parallel "post-materialist" analyses. One's job should be interesting and meaningful, self-fulfilling; working conditions should be pleasant. But actually translating these expectations into reality is somewhat problematic. Among those at work, few would agree that their jobs fulfil their "post-materialistic" aspirations. Most of them, however, do not express their disappointment by rejecting what work is offered, but rather by adapting to it.

As our own analyses show, there are certainly differences among young people in their attitudes toward work. Of major interest are the distinctions we have noted by country - for example that Japanese youth expresses both the highest levels of dissatisfaction with work and the lowest levels of movement between jobs, while, in contrast, young Americans are highly critical of work and highly prone to drift around in the labour market.

Differences also exist among boys and girls. On average, the latter seem more committed to intrinsic rewards. This does not, however, reflect "post-materialistic" innovations. Rather than

being new, the girls' values reflect consistently feminine approaches to work, in existence at least since systematic investigations of these issues began in the 1920s(83).

If a significant change in work-related values can be found among boys, it is in the narrowing of traditional social class divisions. Working class youth is coming to have aspirations of job meaningfulness and self-fulfilment, along with traditional concern for pay and security, while middle class youth is adding job security to its aspirations for self-fulfilment and challenge.

The question for the last decades of the 20th century is the extent to which these and other views we have recorded are likely to hold constant: whether the attitudes of youth are likely to modify and in which ways under the impact of social, economic and political developments. This cannot be answered quantitatively, but a number of trends in OECD countries suggest the kinds of tension that are likely to shape attitudes.

The first and most obvious has been the demise of the postwar economic boom. For the first time in three decades, economic trends have cast doubt on the continuing development of social security and social mobility(84). Trapped between a past they ignore and a future no one can forecast with any certainty, the young people of today are naturally finding it extremely difficult to work out coherent, forward-looking life strategies for themselves. They can be by no means sure that life will be any better for them than it was for their parents.

But the issues for youth go deeper than the current economy. What has distinguished an increasing number of this century's young people from older age groups has been the lack of either a clear or a permanent place in the social pattern of the world of work. While many young people work, they are not really seen to be in the work force, but rather at school or in apprenticeship programmes preparing for adult jobs. While many leave school early, those who extend their schooling are regarded as having chosen the best way to fulfil their responsibilities to themselves. For only social minorities and the marginal classes - poor farmers, small tradesmen, the under-proletariat and the poorer levels of the working classes - does a state of non-youth exist; for all others, youth proceeds slowly and without a sharp demarcation into adulthood(85).

The massive expansion of education has bestowed upon the majority of young people the social status of youth, and with it the promise that delayed responsibilities would go hand in hand with postponed gratifications, that the acceptance of limited access to the full duties and the equally full privileges of adulthood would, in turn, be followed by upward social mobility and social satisfaction.

These promises implicit in the postwar social structure for youth are now being attenuated. The promise of social mobility through education which sustained the middle and working classes' commitments to increased schooling has begun to lose ground. The

economic recession highlighted the diminished value of educational credentials (which had already begun) and fostered doubts about the fashionable idea of more and more schooling for the young. The "social contract" they have implicitly accepted is at risk, and it is questionable whether a recovered economy would be able fully to restore it.

For many of today's youth, this state of affairs means that planning toward predictable outcomes in the labour market is increasingly difficult, and it may become even more so in the future. Now, as in the past, they can resort to different modes of action to cope with their problems. They can adapt, live through their frustration, acquiesce or rebel. While the available data do not sustain any short-term concern for large-scale youth revolt, it is still too soon to establish a definitely reassuring prognosis. As is well known, a minority of young people is already adopting - or is being forced to adopt - deviant, if not disruptive, behaviour with respect to established social norms. While a body of data is becoming available on the amplitude and the specific nature of these behaviours, not much is known yet as to the perception of the phenomenon by young people as a whole and, related to it, the likelihood that the larger share of youth might be "contaminated" by the example of the minority.

Juvenile crime, for example, is increasing in most countries, while the age of the most youthful offenders is declining, and the proportion of girls increasing (80 per cent). Alcohol intake is increasing, girls becoming more involved, while drug consumption is growing among the younger age groups(86).

With the use of alcohol and drugs, suicide rates among young people are also increasing. A recent analysis reveals that while in the United Kingdom population as a whole "there has been a gradual but steady decline in the suicide rate during the last few decades...the pattern for 15 to 19 year-olds has been different. In spite of a fall in other age groups, suicide in young people continued to increase in frequency up to the early 1970s. Moreover, the suicide rate in adolescent girls has continued to rise right up to the present time. It has doubled over the last 20 years. The trend in the United States has been similar"(87).

Teenage illegitimate pregnancies are also increasing. Although the overall number of illegitimate births in Member countries has undergone different changes since the turn of the century, the pregnancies for the 15 to 19 age group have reflected similar trends in most countries, increasing at rates faster than for older groups(88).

Finally, one has to note the recent changes in the work-related behaviour of, still, a minority among young people. We have seen previously how little hard data exist supporting the view that youth "post-materialistic" demands for work go as far as a substantial refusal of unsatisfactory job opportunities. We have to add here, however, that at least some qualitative evidence exists that groups of young people engage voluntarily in recurrent

unemployment. A recent French study has found that, especially among those whose education has not led them toward any specific trade, this is perceived as personally desirable, providing both freedom and variety in their social lives(89).

This same trend is expressed in the considerable extension of what is commonly called "occupational marginalism". A French study contributed to the CERI project reports that the last ten years have seen more and more examples of young people in industrial societies who, on finishing their compulsory schooling or occupational training including (in particular) advanced training, refuse to take up a real job immediately and, rejecting any idea of a medium- or long-term project and any thought of stability and security, prefer to continue with temporary experiences, opportunities for change and ill-defined or clandestine interim activities, while shunning anything resembling a real commitment. It is not possible to estimate their exact number, because they usually cannot be recorded by normal census methods, but it would seem that several hundreds of thousands of young persons aged under 25 in France have come to transform what for others is a normal transition from school to work (usually a rapid change both in psychological and in socio-economic respects) into a long period of hesitation, of never satisfied curiosity and of abortive efforts.

It is impossible to list all these marginal activities fully, because they are so numerous, varied, changeable and often demeaning, ranging from odd jobs to seasonal work, from hawking to farming communities, from lawful selling and prospecting to pre-delinquency trafficking. While it is becoming difficult to distinguish between those who take refuge in such jobs of their own free will and those who are obliged to do so by necessity, the employment crisis appears to increase the number of such pseudo-occupations and temporary jobs and to end up by making many young persons like and grow accustomed to them who originally showed no spontaneous signs of such instability(90).

Most adults would, no doubt, classify such cases of youth behaviour as "marginal" and objectionable in terms of established social norms. But would the majority of young people agree on such labelling? Not much systematic data exists to help us answer this, but attention should be paid to what little there is. One can recall, for example, a recent Swiss study of young recruits - a non-deviant population almost by definition - that shows how much adults' and youths' evaluation of what marginality means might be at variance(91). While most adults would probably share the widespread youth opinion that drug addicts, some of the mentally or physically handicapped and the members of esoteric religious sects should be classed as "marginal to society", one wonders how many would agree further with these recruits and consider "old people" highly marginal, and "rockers", "punks" or "radical youth" not all that marginal to society as they would see it.

All these youngsters - those who "act out" and those who observe - have something in common: the "unfinished" social positions they find themselves in for longer and longer periods of time, and the existence of widespread anxiety over one's future, especially one's working future. On this basis the dividing line between the majority and the minority of youth - still well established at the turn of the 1980s - remains fragile. As a recent Swiss Commission on Youth cogently puts it(92):

> Demonstrations among the younger generation have been inspired by extremist minorities, true enough. True, too, that these minorities are in various ways cut off from the main stream, even from the majority of young people. But the problems of these minorities are not to be set apart from the problems of the majority and that does not just mean the majority of young people.

Chapter II

TO ADULTHOOD THROUGH SCHOOLING

> Fate and free will exist, but they are part of a process of improvement, upward mobility or, most frequently, of a mere reproduction of an individual's and a family's lifestyle; and this process is itself predetermined by the supply of jobs in our society(1).

> *If school examinations were to be abolished, then it would be necessary for classes to be abolished, then it would be necessary for classes to become smaller, in order to allow the teacher to form a closer communication with each pupil. These classes or groups would be co-educational to allow for a natural atmosphere to develop. Each group would not study history, geography, mathematics, English as subjects, but in relationship to life ... But even then someone would undoubtedly discover some other devious device to be exploited and used as a 'job ticket'* - a 15 year old girl, United Kingdom(2).

As young people reach statutory school leaving age, the questions of choice become paramount. Childhood is ending and adulthood is drawing closer. Puberty has already set in, and the young face unfamiliar desires and new obligations. The surrounding adult community's attitudes have also changed. The family, teachers, neighbours expect adolescents to behave differently, to assume some new responsibilities; for them, the choices involve deciding on what kind of an adult they wish to be, the roads to take to adulthood, and whether they want to begin the process or delay it still further.

Because schooling has played such a dominant role in these young people's lives and because it will so greatly influence their ultimate occupations, many of the basic initial choices about adulthood become choices about education - whether to leave school or stay, which educational stream to join, whether to combine part-time work and schooling, whether to opt for training programmes outside the regular education system, whether to plan to return to school at some later date.

How young people go about making these choices is not universally clear. For many, as we shall see, there is not a lot of freedom; but for all, previous educational experience, social class, gender, the lack of places in a desired educational programme or job area limit the possibilities and probabilities.

Nonetheless, in the last decades, young people in all OECD countries have been making at least one common choice: to stay at school longer. In most countries, this means to delay their participation in the labour market. This option has been compounded in a number of countries by political decisions to increase the years of compulsory schooling(3).

As we have already seen, for the young, schooling and the labour market are overtly related. They stay on at school because they expect this to enhance their job opportunities. They frequently note the reality of this role of school. A girl, an early school leaver in Scotland, said in her own idiom(4):

> *If I had my chance I would have stayed in school and learned instead of just mucking around. I would like to of taken my O levels as well, as now you can't get a job without O levels. The work I have it's nothing exciting, and now I realise I should of stayed on school longer as I would of had a better job - school was great really, you had your friends and some teachers would have a good laugh with you. But once you leave, well, that's you and you have to started looking for a job, which is really hard. Plus your wages are poor. If I have any children they're not leaving school, they all stay on so they have a good education and will get better jobs.*

In some OECD countries - Germany and Japan, for example - the link between school and work is exceedingly tight: the gains in schooling parallel declines in labour force participation. In Japan, the number of 15-17 year-olds at school grew by 10 per cent between 1970 and 1975 (from around 80 per cent of the age group to about 90), while comparable labour force participation rates declined by roughly the same amount. A similar increase in staying-on paralleled by a decrease in labour force participation occurred in Germany during the 1970s, with a sudden jump about midway in the decade, related in part to the introduction in many Länder of a 10th year of full-time schooling following the normal compulsory period(5).

These links between prolonged school attendance and decline in labour force participation make it appear that young people have only two choices on approaching adulthood: to stay on at school or get a job. This, though, is not quite the case. Education and work do not, in fact, exhaust the options at this stage. There is a third alternative that appears to be increasingly taken: non-participation in either school or the labour market. The following data from France, Italy and Australia will illuminate the situation(6).

At the turn of the 1970s, about half the French 15-19 year-olds were in school. Another 29 per cent were in the labour force. The remaining 27 per cent were found in neither. Between the early 1970s and 1978, labour force participation of the age group declined by about 8 per cent, transferred in roughly equal shares to the education system and the non-participatory group. The Italian data reveal a similar phenomenon: high rates of non-participation among 14-19 year-olds, especially girls. In Australia, the same phenomenon appears, with the level of non-participation among 15-19 year-olds almost doubling since 1975 and 1979.

To some extent, the phenomenon may be an artefact of data collection: youth who are "residual", left over when those who are counted do not total the whole population, some of whom may be travelling about, a category often used in official statistics to account for them. The true explanation, however, would appear to be that there are four other options besides school or the formal labour market, data which are hard to come by. The first is work at home which in Italy, for example, occupies many girls. The second is juvenile crime (on the increase). The third, about which least is known, is engagement in the "cash" economy where young people work on a more or less need basis outside the regular labour market.

Finally, there is still a fourth option, namely to participate simultaneously in schooling and the labour market. The evidence on this remains fragmentary, but in the United States and Canada, at least, large numbers of upper secondary school and college youth are attending school full-time and holding part-time or full-time jobs as well(7).

Data such as these make it clear that today's youth is by no means monotypic as regards needs and motivations. Both across and within countries, important differences can be found among groups of youngsters in the kinds of choices available to them and the kinds of choices they make. These kinds of differences will reoccur throughout the remainder of this study. In this chapter we are concerned with the effect they have on decisions young people make about schooling and work.

1. STAYING ON OR LEAVING

I feel there is nothing like a teacher's enthusiasm for his subject to make learning a pleasure - a 13 year-old boy, United Kingdom(8).

Before I got out of school I thought I wouldn't be able to do anything! - Boy, early school leaver, Australia(9).

Young people leave school for many reasons, but two as a pair are overwhelmingly given: they are fed up with it and want to start working right away. Being "fed up with it" comes through

powerfully and we have gone into this at some length in the previous chapter. As to the desire for a job, it is sometimes stated as a need, other times as a preference. Young Swedes who left school at the end of the compulsory cycle said they "preferred" having a job and they felt they "could manage just as well without having gone to upper secondary school"(10). Young Italians said that they "need to work"(11), while in Belgium desire to work was the second most given reason for leaving school(12).

A great many young people have no regrets about leaving school early. Among those who did so in Sweden in 1971, the majority (especially the boys) found gainful employment, and most claimed that their job was either better or similar to what they would have expected to get if they had completed their time at school. Only 14 per cent believed that by leaving early their job chances had suffered(13). Italian school leavers similarly do not, on the whole, express any desire to return to the education system; but those who do give explicitly vocational reasons for wanting to do so(14). So, to generalise, only the future can tell if one was wise or not to leave school early. Few of the young people in our survey regret having done so. Only a few want to go back to get further vocational training.

When asked to recollect what knowledge and experience they acquired during their school years, young leavers in several countries singled out "general basic knowledge" rather than "specialised professional knowledge" or "basic training"(15). The United States and Australia apart, most of the interviewees in the Second World Youth Survey said that education had done little to develop their "individual talents and skills".

Some national studies provide more specific information on the perceived relationship between education and work. Out of a representative sample of young workers from Belgium, 37 per cent saw their educational qualifications as consistent with the requirements of their current job; an equal number claimed the opposite(16). In 1975, some young people in France between 16 and 18 gave similar answers to the same question. About half the group viewed their studies at school as "very useful" or "rather useful" in their work. The other half held the opposite view(17). Five years later, a comparable sample of young French workers shared roughly the same distribution of opinions(18).

As might be expected, however, the kind of schooling has a distinct influence on opinion in this matter. A Swedish longitudinal study showed that vocational secondary pupils found a stronger link between education and work than those who had gone through the general curriculum. In both cases, however, school studies were considered most valuable for those who continued in formal education(19).

If, however, one looks at school leaving in terms of age and school (as distinct from curricular) characteristics, the data also suggest that other factors play a major role, social class and gender especially.

a) Social class differences

Teachers are very necessary and the do a good job there were a few teachers how helped me to learn all I no - Boy, early school leaver in a full-time labouring job, United Kingdom(20).

Whenever data disaggregated by social class are available, young people are seen to differ. The studies analysed in Chapter I, for instance, indicate how working class youth tend to be emotionally closer to their families, to contribute more to the family budget, to marry earlier and so on. Similarly, whenever reasons are sought for different decisions about education and work, socio-economic differences emerge.

In 1975 in Germany, about 60 per cent of the school population in the primary cycle were working class. At subsequent educational levels, the percentage dropped substantially, in the gymnasium to less than 15 per cent of the total(21). In 1971/72 only 14 per cent of the first year enrollees in higher education were working class, while 51 per cent were middle class(22). Even in training programmes, class distinctions occur. A 1976 German enquiry on vocational training found that the working and middle classes were equally represented among those holding the appropriate contract. Of those without a contract, however, only 28 per cent were middle class as against 67 per cent working class(23).

In Belgium in 1976, working class representation in primary schools was about 55 per cent of the school population. At the next level up (1st cycle of secondary) when the children were streamed, most of those from the working class opted for the vocational side where they made up three-quarters of the whole class. On the general (academic) side they provided only one in three. Such choices, of course, have a very powerful influence on subsequent career. The pattern was predictable, young Belgians' attitudes to schooling being clearly linked to father's occupational status(24).

In Italy the national sample of 15-24 year-olds in the 1977 survey also exhibited strong class influences on their attitudes to education and work. More of those from the higher socio-economic levels were found in educational institutions than from the working classes. About half of the total youth population had left school and was in paid employment: 16 per cent from the upper class, 39 per cent from the middle class, and as much as 62 per cent from the working class. Furthermore, among those still enrolled in schools, the choices of course at the post-compulsory levels were, again, strongly biased. The bulk of the upper class youth was in upper secondary or higher education, while only 7 per cent of those from working class families had continued much beyond the upper secondary level(25).

In the United Kingdom (1975) a comparison of the socio-economic status of the fathers of 16 and 18-year-olds showed that the distribution within the compulsory level closely

resembled the national class composition, with 33 per cent of pupils from "non-manual" and 58 per cent from "manual" backgrounds. After this, "individual choices" had led many more of the working class pupils to leave the system. By age 18, the population in school and further education contained 72 per cent from the "non-manual" classes as against 26 per cent from the "manual"(26).

In France in 1976, the working class population in the 10th year of schooling amounted to less than 40 per cent of the total for that level - much less than the two-thirds share held by working class youth of that age in the country's total population(21).

Even in countries where the battle against social biases in the education system have been fought systematically the achievements are well below the objective. In Sweden, for instance, the 1977 upper secondary school population reflected without any doubt the socio-economic scale of privilege in the country, with 57 per cent of the children of university graduates and barely 8 per cent of the least privileged offspring to be found in the "noble" lines, the 3 or 4 year courses leading to higher education (27). While school enrolment has increased for the working class youth in Sweden, it has mainly been directed towards the short vocational lines where the children of parents with higher educational credentials are relatively scarce (less than 9 per cent of them as against 39 per cent from less fortunate families).

The list of reasons why these patterns of social discrimination are seen to persist is long and varied. The young people studied in this project evoke the mismatch between the academically-oriented values of the school and the values of working class families, inadequate parental support, unpropitious home surroundings, coupled often with low aspirations and lack of self-confidence among many of the least privileged of their contemporaries.

It can be seen at once that these differences by class noticed among the young are, in a sense, perpetuated by themselves, for more often than not their choices are congruent with the wishes of their families. Whether it is to leave or to stay on, most of the French secondary school pupils, for example, tend to follow the lead of their parents(28).

In a longitudinal study of Swedish people who were third graders in 1938, the subjects (by then parents) were asked in the mid-1960s what their educational aspirations were for their own children who were on average the same age as they themselves were when first interviewed. Not all the parents wanted them to go on to higher education. Among those with middle or upper class background, the "good wishers" totalled between a half and four-fifths of the parents. Fathers and mothers from working class backgrounds were much less ambitious. Only about a third of them wanted their children to take their studies further(29).

A recent survey among German parents shows similarly the extent to which parents' views on the future of their children are affected by socio-economic status. The poorer the socio-economic background, the less ambitious were the parents interviewed. Moreover, the majority of the more privileged parents put a top priority on their children "driving themselves constantly when they became adults, and not being complacent", while the majority of the least privileged would prefer their children "not to make too great demands on life, and to be satisfied with a little"(30).

Among American working class parents, despite the hopes that schooling will be an avenue of mobility for their children, the school itself is subtly denigrated. They conclude that their children should be in school "if they want to", but many express limited hopes that they will(31).

In Australia, students from higher socio-economic strata expect more education and gain more from it than their less privileged peers(32). Swedish youth expresses much the same sentiments. Three-quarters of upper secondary pupils and four-fifths of the vocational line pupils there draw attention to the unequal status attached to the various educational courses(33).

Young Americans from low educational background show a much greater sense of powerlessness than their peers with higher educational credentials(34). When asked whether they wanted to improve their life prospects over the following ten years, about 33 per cent of German unskilled youth replied that they were not interested(35). Asked whether they agreed with the statement that "it is only fair that the more humble dead-end jobs should be taken up by youngsters with no qualifications", a large number of Italian unskilled youngsters expressed a positive opinion(36). Notwithstanding the heavy employment handicaps resulting from living in certain localities, the majority of young people from poor families quite often refuse to move more than a very few miles to secure a better job(37).

The class-rooted attitudes observed here seem to be characterised by two tendencies: an overlap between what parents and youth think they can expect from the economic and education system (what might be called the "social worth" expectation) and, second, an early development of these attitudes, which shows how important family influences are in shaping the basic values upon which young people later "independently" build their lives(38, 39, 40).

So, many of today's young people from the least privileged backgrounds - that is those most in need of structural assistance - approach the educational world having already conditioned themselves to take as little advantage of existing opportunities as possible. For these youth, the absence of an ambitious "life plan" is probably determinant in leading them to leave the formal education system, especially when they come to feel little emotional attachment to the daily life of the school.

Then, as a recent study puts it, "in the absence of a strong motivation to continue, their disenchantment decides the issue"(41).

The process is little understood, but it is observable. The humble position of a child's parents often produces a set of values - pessimism, passivity, a sense that economic and educational motivation are biased against them - which is then, in complex and varied ways, communicated to the child. That orientation is, in turn, often reinforced by treatment in school. Doubtful that schooling will work on his or her behalf, sensing a sharp discrepancy between life in school and life outside, there is little reason not to leave when the age of compulsion is reached or not to join an educational course less demanding but with lower returns.

b) Sex differences

> Difficult was the night. Had that not been enough, the baby born is a girl - vernacular proverb, Italy.

Gender seems to have the same effect on most girls as working class membership has on youth in general: it dampens their aspirations and decreases their competitiveness both in school and in the labour market. But while working class boys and girls achieve less than others in terms of educational credentials and employment levels, the paths followed by girls are essentially sex specific.

Whenever data disaggregated by sex are available, the resulting statistical patterns often differ for boys and girls. This very much applies to decisions with respect to schooling. Girls' participation in education in a number of Member countries show basically the same three main features: i) overall participation rates have increased, sometimes spectacularly over the most recent decades; ii) girls are less critical than boys about school life, are less truant, drop out less, complete the course of study more often; and iii) alongside this positive approach to both school and learning, most girls stubbornly persist in choosing "feminine" educational programmes - "feminine" vocational lines or higher education courses - and choose short rather than long and more prestigious degree routes. In short, they tend to opt for educational backgrounds in line with the comparatively lower earning and prestige they will face later on in the labour market.

In Japan, girls' participation rates in education increased considerably between 1960 and 1975(42). The 15 to 17 age group almost doubled its presence in schools, from 52 per cent of the age group in 1960 to 90 per cent in 1975. Boys' enrolments expanded less during the same period, and by 1975 a higher proportion of girls 15 to 18 were in school than boys. For the older age group, the 18 to 21-year-olds, the pattern of enrolment was similar, with girls' participation rates in upper secondary and higher education increasing fivefold, and boys' rates

increasing by a little over two-and-a-half times. Despite the percentage change, however, boys remained twice as likely as girls to be in advanced schooling.

Somewhat similar trends can be found in France, where the average school leaving age has increased more for the girls than for the boys since the turn of the century(43), and in the United States where young women in the age groups 16 to 19 and 20 to 24 have substantially increased their enrolment in educational institutions, from 56 per cent in 1960 to 65 per cent in 1979 for the younger group, and from 8 to 20 per cent for the older(44). Relatively to American boys, young females have gained substantial ground. By 1979, the "equality" ratio for school enrolment had become almost one to one for young people 16 to 24, in part because male school enrolment declined in the 1970s.

Perhaps paradoxically, girls seem to have fared less well in Scandinavian countries, where the battle for equality between the sexes has been fought particularly vigorously. In Denmark, in 1976, the "equality" ratio among 15-year-old enrollees was about one girl to one boy. Among the 19-year-olds, this ratio was one girl to two boys(45). In Sweden, between the mid-sixties and the mid-seventies, sex equality in education declined. Initially, both boys' and girls' enrolments in academically-oriented secondary education streams increased, but after a peak, girls' enrolments decreased in contrast to the boys'(46).

The irony of these conditions, with girls less likely to continue on to higher levels of education, is that they seem to be more satisfied with their schooling than boys. In Denmark, if a pupil leaves the education system before completing a course or without having passed the final exams, it will most probably be a boy than a girl, whether it happens in primary or in secondary schooling(45). In Italy, girls tend to leave school only after completing a course of study while male leavers tend to be found at all age levels. Italian girls are less likely than boys to declare they left school because of no interest in studying (27.5 per cent of the girls and 34 per cent of the boys)(47). In Sweden, girls consistently express more positive feelings about school than boys. Among those who leave compulsory education without completing the required examinations, fewer of the girls claim to have done so because they were "fed up with school", "preferred getting a job" or "had troubles with teachers". Among those who, after completing the compulsory requirements, decided not to continue in education, boys were more likely than girls to endorse the view "I felt one learned so little at school that was useful" (40 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls)(48).

Truancy, as yet another expression of dislike of schooling, is considerably more common among boys than girls. A recent British study(49), while showing that truancy is more common among young people from the working class than from middle class, also reveals that working class girls engage in it less than working class boys.

Girls, then, seem to like school more than boys, and seem to be successful at it, at least in terms of completing the courses they have enrolled in. Yet they are less likely to continue to higher education, and, as we shall see, are less likely to enter the more advanced and higher status courses when they do stay in school. Why this is the case is complex, but part of the reason has to do with the options available to young women once they enter the labour market, and with the suggestions they get from family and peers.

In Sweden, as in other countries, some of the lines of the upper secondary school as well as the higher education courses and the programmes run within the Labour Market Training System are segregated by sex. As a Swedish report puts it, sex-bound choices start early, when subjects become optional in the three last years of compulsory education(50). In Denmark, an important dividing boundary between boys and girls occurs at entrance to the gymnasium. Here the sex differences which show up between the 7th and 9th forms(51), paralleling a similar process in the United Kingdom(52), expand greatly through the choices boys and girls make in mathematics and language, about 80 per cent of the boys and 20 per cent of the girls in the former and about 40 per cent of the boys and 60 per cent of the girls in the latter(53). Similarly sex-polarised distributions were found in 1977 in both apprenticeship and basic vocational courses in Denmark(54).

The tendency towards early choices away from mathematics and science considerably narrows subsequent educational and employment options available to girls, since mathematics and science are still a gateway to many academic courses and professional careers. The choices also create a familiar puzzle for educators: many girls - a good share of the compulsory school population - perform for years just as well, if not better, than the boys. Yet when the time of binding choices approaches, these girls seem to lose confidence and discover, seemingly all of a sudden, some insurmountable limitation to their intellectual power.

It is tempting to see this discovery as an indication that girls have less interest in working. Their educational choices reflect their relative unconcern with occupational opportunities and economic advancement. This easy explanation, however, makes it difficult to understand the current high rates of women in the labour force in so many Member countries. Even less would it explain the long history of women in paid employment. At the turn of the century, the participation rates of United States young women aged 16 to 20 totalled no less than 40 per cent(55); at the same time, the phenomenon of female labour was so marked in the United Kingdom that government committees viewed it as a primary cause, along with overcrowded homes, of rampant infant mortality(56).

If past and recent history reveals that women have never shunned the labour market when in need or out of interest, it is nonetheless also true that the profile of their personal investment in their work remains on average different from the men's. Whatever the reasons leading to it - and they are many and

varied - most women end up occupying subordinate roles in the labour force, with less pay, less career opportunities and less responsibilities(57). Patterns of discrimination are obvious. But it is important to recognise how powerful are the attitudes women bring to their educational opportunities and employment situations, how often girls' competitiveness decreases with age(58), how more often than boys they place "family" before "work" among their life objectives(59) and how less frequently than boys girls voice interest in promotion or changing jobs(60). These attitudinal characteristics sharpen the issues of education and work for women.

There is little doubt that the observed attitudes of girls result from the same institutions that affect boys. The family, peers, the media, the school, the employer, all act in consonance to impose traditional sex roles. Conformity is a much praised quality in the community and a vital factor in insuring social stability. A girl, not any differently from a boy, will tend to follow the path established for her. The trouble, insofar as education and work are concerned, is that the social roles set aside for girls do not always work to their advantage. As a recent Australian study puts it: "sex works to the disadvantage of females. Other things equal they tended to leave school earlier, not undertake further study, take longer to find a job, be unemployed for a longer period, and be more likely to have experienced unemployment"(61).

Even for the more gifted educationally, the equation "more school satisfaction = continued education" does not seem to hold true for girls as often as it does for boys(62). As we have seen, as girls advance through school, they decrease their aspirations for their future social status, while the same does not seem to happen to boys(63). In schools, girls' expressed lack of self-confidence in their own educational capabilities seems to manifest itself before completion of compulsory education, so especially in mixed classes where the physical proximity with boys appears to act as a trigger in this respect(64). Lack of self-confidence and too much school stress as rationales for school leaving seem also to be the almost exclusive leitmotiv, albeit in a minor key, of girls.

With the decline of educational ambition, girls' range of desirable occupations as adults also narrows. Research data from several countries agree in showing how girls' occupational choices, towards the end of compulsory education, cluster around very few categories compared to boys(65). Girls are likely to choose - or be allowed to go to - educational courses where they are likely to be surrounded by other girls. Only a handful dare to enter "non feminine careers".

During the three gymnasium years in Denmark, 40 per cent of the female school population intrude in the male-dominated mathematics lines, where more than 80 per cent of the boys are found(66). In the United States, a 1978 survey by the Project on Equal Education Rights found that women constituted a national average of no more than 11 per cent of enrolments in traditionally

male-oriented post-secondary vocational training, where in addition to the programme's learning difficulties the girls often had to contend with "being teased by the boys, sometimes condescended to by the teachers, and occasionally actively discouraged by the response of their communities"(67).

There are not many girls who can make it on their own, alongside the boys. Most claim that they cannot or do not wish to do so. For a lot of them, the difficulties start early, in the family, where in countries with otherwise different cultures, similar assumptions about schooling for girls seem to prevail. "Trouble at home" was given by 27 per cent of Swedish girls as a reason for their not completing compulsory education, while only 11 per cent of the boys said so(68). "Lack of encouragement at home" further depleted the Swedish female school cohort at the end of the compulsory period, with 13 per cent of them as against 1 per cent of the boys voicing it as one of the reasons to discontinue their education(69). "Lack of support from the parents" was put forward by more than 14 per cent of Greek girls as against just over 1 per cent of boys as a reason not to continue study beyond the compulsory period; 53 per cent of these same girls - as against 33 per cent of the boys - would have liked to go on in post-secondary courses if only the impeding factors could have been removed(70). Even when the family actually encourages educational expectations, it seems to do so differently for the girls than the boys. While it is correct to say that parental social status is an important determinant of extended schooling, the statement holds true much more strongly for sons than for daughters(71, 72).

Peers also are important in shaping girls' approaches to the future. Young American women who refuse to enroll in non-traditional vocational programmes because "their boyfriend vetoed it" reveal part of the dilemma(73). Girls who plan to marry early settle for shorter school courses, hence modest job plans, if at all. Young women aiming at high status occupations are often found to postpone marriage and motherhood in their plans for the future; in doing so, they frequently find themselves at odds with both female and male peers(74).

What girls and boys aim at is in fact the same for both: achieving adult status, entering adult occupations in an adult world. But doing this has very different consequences. As a recent study puts it: "the major tasks society expects a woman to carry out are to get married and to have children. This is the norm which is communicated to women, and full adult status appears to be contingent upon its fulfilment. The male's task appears to be mainly to secure and keep full-time employment"(74). Furthermore, the study continues: "Those who violate existing sex-role expectations may be rejected or exposed to ridicule. Such social sanctions are powerful enough to ensure that most people conform, to a greater or lesser extent, to the stereotypes"(75).

Traditional domestic vocation gives coherence to girls' behaviours. It provides them with a reassuring feeling of security, a lulling belief in "happy ever after" whereby no extra effort is really needed on the way to a satisfactory adulthood. Not even the knowledge of higher divorce rates, of increasing numbers of female heads of families or the likelihood that they will have to go out to work for much of their life seem to modify these earlier attitudes.

The great effort made in the past decade by pressure groups and public authorities towards achieving sex equality seems so far to have had only limited success. Some women have certainly benefited from it - more often the better qualified, and those from the more privileged social strata. The gap between "college" and "non-college" women remains wide. The "non-college" women, an American study concludes, "got the least help in planning for their future, either at home or in school. They felt least prepared for life after high school; although they professed themselves 'eager to work', they had limited aspirations and most said they had little information about what kinds of jobs might be available to them"(76).

For girls as for boys from modest backgrounds, some of the values established in their home communities turn out to have severe educational and employment consequences. When being working class is combined with being female, the outcomes are even more harsh. What remains to be fully explored is the extent to which the social inertia that seems to trap them in unambitious and limited courses of life is so deeply rooted as to be immune from educational or labour market changes. Or whether it is, on the contrary, a process that could be reversed if only the educational and employment possibilities would genuinely work towards the social goal of equality for all.

2. EDUCATION AND WORK: THE CURRICULUM

The dilemma of the curriculum for many young people can be simply put: schools are supposed to prepare one's future occupational role, but they operate in isolation from the actual world of work. To a great extent, the curriculum ignores this situation, but there have been efforts, in the past and currently, to reorient at least parts of it to meet the vocational, as distinct from academic requirements.

Young people and their families repeat that what should make education valuable is its link to the world of work. They expect that more schooling will mean better jobs. That, after all, has been the promise of the post-war boom in education. Many who have not continued in school are uncertain about their choices. Finding themselves in unskilled jobs, some are quite specific about what they have missed. In the words of a young Canadian, "I

wish I'd taken a university entrance course. I never thought I'd go on in school ... Now I see that that's what you have to do to get where you want to go"(77).

Nevertheless, what most of them find is a curriculum and pedagogy almost devoid of content relating to work, and an air of isolation from the world outside the school. What they will do as adults seems to have little relationship to what they do in school, even though they are repeatedly being told that school is preparation for adulthood. A study of Canadian young people, in their last year of secondary school, or having just graduated, reveals just these feelings(77): "I think school is a waste of time ... there is so much else I'd rather be doing" ... "High school treats you like a little kid ...I'm not mommy's little boy going off to school" ... "Sometimes I felt like telling my teachers where to put it. They were talking to me like I was five years old".

In other countries one hears the same complaints. An 18-year-old Belgian said: "I don't think there are many schools where you can really develop your personality. The gap between school and real life is much too wide. This problem has not yet been solved even with innovative curriculum(78). And a boy clerk in the United Kingdom: "I found that at school we were only taught to pass exams ... We were not educated about life ... I discovered in my school life that I went to, listened to and learned more from teachers who had worked outside the education circle. Perhaps it was a coincidence"(79).

An adult, also in the United Kingdom, put the matter in a nutshell for the most affected by saying on their behalf: "In the adult world as they conceive it, blackboards are presents you give wee lassies at Christmas, a pen is one of these things lying in the top drawer in the sideboard or possibly down the back of the chair and paper is kept in the toilet or is delivered with the milk. A discussion is when you say what you said before, but louder. Life is about working for your living or living on the dole, paying the rent or getting Social Security to pay it for you, above all, it's about making decisions in harsh concrete situations; the classroom has about as much relevance to their situation as does a gobstopper"(80).

The view that schools ought to be about the outside world, especially about the world of work, and the frustration that they are not, are not new; they have persisted during much of the present century(81). This should not obscure the fact, though, that with the extension of education to growing numbers of children, public authorities assumed greater responsibility to transmit a common moral code and to mould good citizens, and that this involved preparing the young for economically productive roles, necessary for both a national productivity and the individual's ultimate economic success.

Economic productivity, however, has been a constantly protean objective. Technological changes, political and social decisions, demographic shifts have all meant that the labour market is

constantly being refashioned. Established skills become less important, new ones take their place. Some of the latter require even less training than hitherto as complex jobs become divided and automated. Other desired skills become more comprehensive requiring higher levels of education.

The frequency of those shifts has greatly compounded the problems of an education system attempting to teach for the world of work. Should young people be taught the more basic things like literacy and numeracy under the assumption that these are necessary for adulthood and most kinds of jobs? Should specific skills be taught, like welding or typewriting? How should they be taught? In apprenticeship programmes, on the job, in schools? When should the shift from general skills to specific skills occur? How should the choices for youth be structured and made?

OECD countries have answered these questions in different ways. Most of those in Europe have directed their young people at around 11 or 12 into different kinds of school - a vertical system - depending upon their predicted occupational destinations. These provide both general skills and specific skills oriented towards future occupations - whether "outside" or continuing for a while in the education system. In the United States and Canada the decision has been to offer comprehensive education up to ages 16-17, with the option of occupational or vocational programmes in the same schools.

So, as the length and breadth of education has extended to embrace more young people, so has preparation for working life assumed greater importance in the school system; but in all the countries participating in the present survey actual contact with the working world outside has diminished. Certainly it has acquired a place in a part of the curriculum in opaque and indirect ways, in the form of an "abstract code". Students were oriented towards a prospective world of work, and the demands of work appeared in the curriculum alienated from concrete vocational situations.

Education has tried to compensate for the loss of direct visibility of work processes by introducing texts about work, by calling education a form of work, or by simulating work in the curriculum. But no direct experience is offered of what it means to be a worker: adhering to time schedules, to contracts, relating to fellow workers, getting to know the position of one's job in the labour market, and so on. These things have customarily been imparted by means of abstract instruction. They have become "pedagogized". "Work" in the curriculum, then, is something that is <u>taught</u>, something that is <u>taught about</u> and <u>taught for</u>. In this process "work discipline" and other human questions integral to the actual work situation similarly get translated into problems of pedagogy.

The consequences of all this for the individual obviously vary from one pupil to another, and we know all too little about them. But they are most severe for those whose subsequent work as an adult (as well as whose life situation) is most divorced from the

life of the school, namely those from the working class. For those going into business or one of the professions, however, the "pedagogy of work" in school is found to correspond to the actual disciplines they encounter on entering adult life, so, not surprisingly, they are less hostile to school. In contrast, the others feel emancipated when they leave school. They see their work as the opportunity to be independent, to manage their own lives, to accept responsibility, to sustain involvement in concrete tasks. Even when they are critical of their jobs, they find the discipline more appealing than the "pedagogy of work"(82).

The tension inherent in developing education systems to prepare young people for the world of work while work itself is absent from the curriculum has repeatedly led to efforts to "open up" education to the world of work. The introduction of vocational training programmes, the enlargement of contacts with employers as part of the activity of the school, greater emphasis on the world of work in the curriculum have all been responses to the demands that the gap between work and school - in effect, the gap between adulthood and school - be narrowed. The desire has been to tighten the link between education and work, to make it more visible by providing youth with more specific work qualifications and work discipline.

These endeavours will be discussed in the next chapter. Here it is sufficient to say that the pressures for them are extensive, and that they often have the support of young people and their parents. They reflect the desire of employers to have young workers better prepared for work, both in terms of skills and attitudes. Yet, in most Member countries, most of the recent attempts to open the school to work have remained marginal to the national educational effort as a whole. They are targeted at a minority of individuals, both in school and in the work force, and are limited to selected sectors of the labour market. Finally, evaluations of the programmes reveal inconsistent results.

3. EDUCATION AND WORK: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The creation of guidance and counselling services is a particularly prominent institutional response to the need to keep the link between education and work "visible" to young people and their families. Their development in most Member countries has been sizeable, sometimes spectacularly so. This, with the complexity and diversity of the services, makes it hard to establish a common framework for evaluating their effect on the decisions young people make.

For those they are there to assist, however, the assessment of those guidance and counselling services appears to have presented no problem. At all levels in the education system, young people have been using such terms as "insufficient", "inadequate", "non-existent", "mystifying" to express their dissatisfaction.

A 1973 survey in the United States secondary schools found that guidance services were mostly considered as inept, irrelevant and out of touch with the interests and motivations of teenagers(83). A more recent study of high school graduates in the same country found that "the topic of guidance was by far the most frequently discussed, often in anguished or even angry tones"(84). A recent Australian report similarly concludes: "Allied to the perceived lack of relevance of school curricula is the inadequacy of guidance given to young people regarding the outside world and the work place in particular. Numerous studies indicate that students were dissatisfied with the guidance they had received and felt they were not prepared for leaving school. A study of young workers found that among the early leavers, "seventy per cent left with little or no idea of what they wanted to do, with only 11 per cent considering that they had adequate vocational guidance"(85).

A recent Swedish survey of 2,500 post-compulsory pupils found many of them feeling that the descriptive information they receive about jobs was too meagre. The printed material available to them had been found good for orientation purposes (65 per cent of respondents), but definitely inadequate for choosing a career (5 per cent only of the respondents were satisfied on this point)(86). They also believed that the information given was too rosy and unrealistic about occupations. The finding that the column space in a Swedish series called Yrkesupplysningar (literally, Items of Vocational Information) is biased in favour of white-collar occupations (which get 65 per cent as opposed to the 35 per cent given to manual, clerical and service trades) gives a clue as to whom in the school and working population might be feeling left behind(86).

Much the same opinions on guidance are held by young people in the United Kingdom. Although the absolute amount of displeasure varies from study to study, the overall picture is relatively stable. Both compulsory school pupils and older students in schools and colleges are by and large unhappy with the quality and amount of guidance received, which have not been of much help in planning their careers(87).

Many more data from other countries could be cited without changing the resulting pattern of responses. From Canada, for instance, we have: "Advice from guidance counsellors is not too swift. They're up in the clouds. They don't tell you nothing" and "There is not enough counsellors. They're having to take care of a whole grade of people. They're spending most of their time running through papers and there is not much time for them to sit around and rap"(88).

As well as complaints such as these, many young people at school and their parents question the sense of having the first - and often only - contact with guidance services when it is, as far as they are concerned, too late. These services are intended to help the young during an educational career characterised by points of decision-making where the largest issue at stake is not the decision as such, but the fact that each

decision is to a large extent irreversible. In many countries the first of such mileposts comes towards the end of compulsory education. In these same countries, guidance does not start much before the last year of this period when, as many pupils affirm - and their parents confirm - their decisions about what to do next are, for good or bad, already taken.

Another matter for disappointment is that the "guidance" available bears on one's occupational abilities and not - as expected - on job openings in the market. Other complainants (no less numerous), while acknowledging the purposes of the guidance services, feel these services should concentrate more on practical matters such as the transition from school to work, how to look for jobs, how to apply, how to present oneself at interviews and the like.

Among the older pupils at the post-compulsory level, one often hears the opinion that the information on professional life as diffused by guidance services should be considered with caution. The images purveyed, they say, are too optimistic and/or too detached from the reality of working life, and the implications for one's personal life too general to be of real use in deciding what professional life to pursue. Another complaint is that the information is often too detailed and complex, the alternatives proposed too numerous, to allow meaningful decisions to be taken in the usually little time available at school to study guidance material and put it to use.

Many reasons can be found for the confusion with which guidance services are approached by their young clients and the ambiguity that seems to colour the services' responses to them. Some of these are attitudinal; other reasons, however, are institutional rather than individual(89). Looking at the range of services provided in Member countries under the label of "guidance", one cannot avoid being struck by their variety. Furthermore, the observed differences between countries seem often to be matched, if not outweighed, by comparable regional variations within national boundaries. Emphases in staffing (psychologists, psychometrists, counselling specialists, teachers, employment officers) vary as do tasks allocated - case work with students, improvement of teaching methods, maintenance of school discipline, special subject teaching within the curriculum, liaison with vocational training or employment agencies.

In effect, the disharmonies about the services expressed by young people and their families is a reflection of the disharmonies within the services themselves, which are marred by variety, contradictions, vagueness and uncertainty. Yet, when the actual performance of these services is reviewed, their true objectives resolve themselves into the fulfilment of two distinct functions. The first reflects the oldest tradition in guidance, which is to support vocational training by providing a testing service for aptitudes linked to specific jobs. The second function is newer and stems from the services having shifted their concern from the needs of the market to the needs of the individuals within it, as established by the professional adults.

This kind of guidance, essentially educational in nature, aims at providing youngsters with instruments enabling them to face the changing patterns of working life throughout adulthood - in other words, concerns the individual's development.

In times of economic growth, these two (often co-existing) forms of guidance do not seem to be mutually exclusive. When jobs become scarce, however, the dilemmas they induce in practice become acute. The questions become sharper: should guidance services contain individual choices within well-defined constraints dictated by a "reasonable" assessment of people's potentialities in the current labour market or should they rather enhance the aspirations and the self-development of their clients regardless of predicted employment opportunities? Should guidance suggest, orient and tell young people the right choices or should it seek the more amorphous goal of aiding them in their capacity to make choices on their own? Should guidance meet short-term objectives - in fact, employment needs - or should it rather work on longer-term preoccupations, equipping individuals with information and skills for a life-time of decision-making - a task essentially educational in nature? Or else, could it do both?

No definite solution has yet been given to these puzzles. Instead, countries have developed structures to serve both short- and longer-term objectives, sometimes balance them, more often emphasizing one at the expense of the other.

In fact, the objectives are often shaped by the location of services with respect to existing educational facilities. Where guidance services are separate from the education system, as in special centres for youth equipped with libraries, multi-media resources and specialised guidance staff, in special sections of school libraries or in employment centres (e.g. United Kingdom), or where they become mobile in different areas and sectors of the school population (Germany), or in centres serving all age groups in a population (e.g. the Centres d'information et d'orientation in France), the emphasis is employment-oriented, providing information about careers and their educational/vocational prerequisites. When labour authorities are heavily involved, the information broadens to cover work organisation, industrial relations and career perspectives in labour environments.

In some cases, national specialised agencies(e.g. ONISEP in France or the Appalachian Educational Laboratory in the United States) are often responsible for providing information; in other cases, employment information is provided by local governments and employment services (e.g. the State Occupational Information Co-ordinating Committee in the United States or the Regions in Italy).

From the point of view of their customers, employment guidance centres seem to have been successful in dispelling confusion as to their function. When their assistance is sought (and on the whole they appear to be underutilised), these centres seem to be used according to the expectations of their planners. There are complaints nonetheless. Young people find job portraits too

optimistic; the occupational clusters described in the material too often reflect a reality no longer valid. But more critically, the guidance services in the centres rarely get to school drop-outs, truants, the lowest achievers, those particularly in need of help. This group gets more attention when guidance services are fully integrated within the education system, especially during the compulsory period. But even here the extent to which physical proximity to the guidance officer increases the benefit these youngsters receive does not seem very great.

When guidance is integrated within the curriculum - be it as a separate subject ("addition" approach) or as a reorientation of the whole curriculum ("infusion" approach) - other hurdles spring up between intentions and achievements. As "career education" in the United States and, more recently, the "cycle d'orientation" in France or the "scuola media" in Italy have shown, major obstacles stand in the way of implementing an overall work-oriented guidance programme - not least of them is the exclusively academic style adopted, in the majority of cases, by the teachers in charge of the subject. This leads, as we have seen, to a representation of the world of work without much attraction for the tail group in the school population.

To complicate matters further, the integration of guidance services within school systems seems often to increase confusion as to purposes. The widening of the mandate of guidance to cover individual needs has often blurred the distinction between "guidance" and "counselling" in many schools. [In countries with a strong pastoral care tradition (e.g. the United Kingdom), teachers face much the same problem.] Comparable confusion sets in whenever guidance systems have been especially centred on teaching processes and teachers appointed for guidance purposes, as in Scotland or Sweden, and to some extent New Zealand. The occasional overlapping with school welfare services where they include school psychologists, school doctors and social workers (e.g. Italy) is yet another instance of the possible sources of confusion for young people applying for help.

The picture of guidance and counselling services is thus one that varies from bleakness to confusion. Indeed, for a sizeable number of young people they remain either foreign or irrelevant to their lives at school or their needs in finding a job. A logical next step, then, might be to dispense with them altogether.

But if study after study has shown how little benefit young people have been able to draw from existing services, the same studies invariably reveal the pressing need young people still feel for more information and assistance in this field. A few examples will bring this point home.

In a group of 18-year-olds, for instance, surveyed in a recent Australian study, 59 per cent declared they had no idea or were unsure of what to do once they left school. The worst off were the early school leavers who had very little in the way of qualifications for the labour market and had been forced to take whatever job offer they could get(90). An equivalent group in the

United Kingdom declared similar ignorance, with 60 per cent of fifth-form girls saying they needed more help in deciding what to do after compulsory education(91) and 58 per cent of sixth-form boys feeling they had inadequate knowledge of available job opportunities(92). No more than one-third of young Belgians in a recent study said they had had enough information to plan their educational careers, and only 20 per cent claimed they had had adequate data on job possibilities(93). No more than 41 per cent of young Greeks in another survey were aware of the career opportunities open to them after graduation from post-secondary schools, with the remaining proportion very vaguely acquainted with available possibilities (55 per cent) or ignorant of them (4 per cent)(94).

A national sample of Swedish post-compulsory pupils put their desires concisely: "... they wanted more concrete and up-to-date information about education and training, working environments, the bad and good attributes of different occupations, wages and salaries, and future prospects"(95). Like their younger peers, the higher education students speak of uncertainty, confusion, and lack of information on their studies and subsequent working careers. A recent international workshop reaffirmed the same points: students "are in dire need of information: they are ill-informed about openings and courses, about themselves and about their abilities"(96). Reasons such as these have led both German and French students to abandon higher education programmes(97).

In essence, young people at all levels of the education system, and those who have left school are in virtual agreement. In the words of a Swedish report:

> They want more information about working life to be available at school. They would like orientation on studies and occupations to start at a sufficiently early age, being able to explain to them why it is important to understand more about the factors which exert influence over their different choice alternatives and their way of learning and choosing what is important. On the other hand they want to have a great deal of information which they can immediately make use of, bearing in mind their actual, individual situation(98).

Reaching these goals will not be easy, institutional and structural obstacles abound: lack of co-ordination of existing services, the tension between short-term employment goals and long-term developmental goals, competition among educational, manpower and welfare agencies, the lack of resources to enlarge services(99).

But the problem of guidance may be even more fundamental. Simply providing and co-ordinating services will have limited impact unless more attention is paid to the attitudes, values and expectations towards education and adult life held by youth, and sustained by their close adult communities. These, as we have

discussed before, represent a hidden - and often overlooked - factor highly influential in determining the extent to which guidance is sought, listened to and implemented.

An example might be useful. For the least privileged young people, the limited help received within the family may easily turn into a handicap in their educational decision-making(100). In contrast to their more privileged peers, they are reluctant to take initiatives in the search for information(101), often failing to perceive the need for it. Simply offering them adequate duplicated material is insufficient; they need to be guided into using it. Stimulating the need for information and providing the intellectual means to make correct use of it are paramount if guidance and counselling services are to be valued and valuable.

Since families play a major role in shaping attitudes, guidance services may have to involve parents as well as youth. Unfortunately, the lack of communication between guidance personnel and most parents, especially of low socio-economic background, is dramatic for reasons varying among mistrust of institutions by parents, hostility towards parents by professionals, or simply the lack of time available to professionals and parents(102). But, in part, the problem is surely the lack of common perception of the educational objectives at stake, which often prevents parents and teachers from agreeing on a common definition of roles and a sharing of tasks.

Not being able to enlist most parents - often, it has to be said, for lack of trying - schools remain isolated in their guidance efforts. The task to convince the low achievers or the disaffected pupils that education has indeed a value in improving the quality of their adult life, becomes near hopeless.

The task for guidance begins with young people and their families. Before agreeing on how responsibilities should be shared amongst the partners in the community, before opting for one or another content for guidance materials, before taking a position on the appropriate organisation, administration and the control of guidance services, one should build the kind of structural support for young people that will enhance their interest in the information they need, to process it critically, to recognise the biases in it, and to become aware of the hampering as well as the sustaining influences in their home environment. Only when guidance and counselling services achieve these objectives will they be able to reach their other ends.

4. TRENDS AND ISSUES

> The quality of services cannot be measured by the final product alone, quite often qualities connected with the process are at least as important. This is true for young people spending most of their childhood and youth in school - an educationalist, Norway(103).

"... some learn that they are bright, some that they are not ..." - an educationalist, Sweden(104).

"We have learned that in most cases the fears and tantrums which destroy the resolve in many parents soon subside when the child makes progress. The art is to know what progress is in the eyes of the child" - an educationalist, United Kingdom(105).

The analysis developed in this chapter suggests that the relationship between youth, education and other life opportunities can be characterised in the early 1980s by at least three main features:

i) Schooling is the single most common experience of youth, but it does not carry the same weight in all Member countries, nor does it have the same value for all young people. In some instances, there is an increased interest in school (possibly in reaction to perceived difficulties in the labour market), the young concerned remaining there in larger numbers and for longer periods than before. But many others are choosing to enter the world of work earlier at the cost of shortening their school careers. Still others, in apparently growing numbers, are making two other choices: combining work and schooling simultaneously, or doing neither on any systematic or extended basis.

ii) Young people are quite critical of the education system; but on the whole they believe schooling is and should be important. Nevertheless, they are frustrated with the way schools actually work: the day-to-day operations are abusive and boring; teachers show personal bias in class; there is lack of connection between what they do in school and what will be expected of them in the outside world; the guidance and counselling services are nearly totally inadequate. There is thus little enthusiasm on the part of the young for the education system, even among those who benefit most from it.

iii) Despite the major advances in providing equality of educational opportunity in almost every Member country, social class and gender biases are still widespread. Young people from the lower social classes and girls continue to find it exceedingly difficult to achieve either extended schooling or to enter fields not traditionally open to them. A complicated process is at work where the values and behavioural patterns young people bring to school are reinforced or, less often, modified there. Many who have been taught to be ambitious and entrepreneurial, find the schools willing to enhance those values. Others, with different sets of assumptions and behaviours - often associated with a working class milieu and gender - fare considerably less well.

The implications of these conditions for education for adulthood and especially education for work are by no means obvious, but they are worth searching for. To start with, children do not arrive at school with a clean slate, as it were. They already have opinions, attitudes, and behavioural patterns derived from their interaction with their socio-cultural environment, within and outside the education system. Sometimes this previous knowledge is consonant with what occurs in school, often it is not.

Very early in the life of young people images of adult life become structured in terms of sex stereotypes and hierarchical social values attached to jobs as a function of the skills involved - manual, technical or professional. Very soon the whole approach to life adopted within their milieu can become their own. Apathy, resignation or submission with respect to the social possibilities open to oneself, or conversely, courage, curiosity and entrepreneurial spirit, are assimilated; these characteristics can well become more developed with the passage of time, sustained as they are by the same social dynamics that bred them.

The pedagogical success of educational provisions for adulthood depends critically on an awareness of this pre-existing dynamic, particularly on the part of the planners and the practitioners, and on the timing of the interventions with respect to the age and educational careers of the pupils. In the absence of counteracting experiences, the hampering attitudes of many pupils cannot but grow stronger with time. Institutional interventions designed to give the least privileged among them a fairer chance to construct better lives for themselves will require a generally greater investment in resources and time to achieve comparable results the older the pupil population at which they are directed. In this respect the issue of interventions designed to prevent rather than cure is important to consider.

When one turns to the most specific demand young people make - that formal learning be more clearly and more efficiently tied to the labour market - the responses have been, and can be, varied and complex. But this raises the most serious question of all: whether these demands can or should be satisfied at all. Certainly, the success of current efforts to bring work and the labour market into the education system can be successful remains an open question (we pursue this more fully later).

At the simplest level, questions about how to convert labour market concerns into curriculum and pedagogy abound. Economic and manpower forecasts are notoriously unreliable; and the internal evolution of the labour market in terms of diversification and segmentation is not always crystal clear. The problem is further aggravated by the varying meanings of "education for work". For some, it appears to mean nothing more than instilling forms of work discipline into young people who, it is feared, have lost the work ethic. For others, it involves very immediate information about jobs and job requirements. For still others, it involves breaking the educational and occupational limitations now imposed

upon young people from the working class and women. Not all of these aims are compatible; those who see the aim of guidance services, for example, as orientation of young people to traditional economic and social roles are in conflict with those who see it as raising aspirations towards non-traditional activities.

In addition, there is the question of whether educational institutions would once again be taking on responsibilities they cannot meet if they enlarged their commitment of education for work further. The roots of the problems young people have in the world of work for the most part lie outside the education system, in their families and communities, and in the economic structures around them. Enlarging the expectation that the educational system will resolve the dilemmas of work for young people may simply mean enlarging the frustration they already feel at school.

Finally, there is the paradox that, even as the education system is being pressed to become more work-oriented, the importance of working time appears to be declining for many people. The shortened working week, lengthened paid holidays, mandatory earlier retirements are, in the opinion of many(106), but a few signs of a developing trend, where non-employment needs will likely join, or possibly replace, current labour preoccupations.

If this scenario is correct, then the paradox facing education is a sharp one. The current focusing of resources to meet the most pressing needs of youth runs the risk of introducing into the education system permanent features that are heavily based on transient social demands. Given the traditional inertia in our education system, this means that responding efficiently to today's needs might paradoxically prevent tomorrow's education from fulfilling its broader social mandate with equal efficiency.

Nonetheless, the issue of education for work will not go away; for some groups, in particular the early leavers and drop-outs, its importance remains paramount. As a young machinist in a factory - an early-leaver in the United Kingdom, said:

> *I think the last year at school was not of any use because the teachers didn't bother about you because you were leaving school so I played truant. I didn't like periods all broke up for different subjects. I think I would have been better off leaving school at 15. I now have a job and I work for a good firm. It only took me one week to get a job and I was hardly ever at school. I never really was off at my primary school it was worth going to much better than secondary any day. The teachers took notice of you there*(107).

Such young people, like the others, go to school under the assumption that education is important for employment; but most of them, unlike the others, soon discover that for the only types of job they can reasonably aspire to, this postulate is essentially incorrect. The experience of school brings few

rewards. When the unpleasantness of life there piles up and, in the absence of more ambitious life plans, these youngsters decide to leave education to join a world where adulthood - however illusory - might look within reach, their reference to "those years lost in school" expresses a legitimate charge against the system.

The age in years of these youngsters is often deceptive; many are young adults rather than children. For them, as well as for all those kept in schools longer by compulsion or by necessity, the issue of labour-related education in the school/work debate has a special significance. Perhaps the key question is whether existing schools can change their principles and their practices to accommodate the special needs of a population group that has become essentially older in recent years. No longer children, they could learn more and better if schools could become more central to their interests, and see them as they see themselves, youthful men and women, not misrepresented outsized children. They are no better nor worse than their elders, no brainier nor dimmer than the adults in the community, no more just nor dishonest than the average citizen. They do not harbour any deeply distinctive traits that should set them apart from older people. Fashionable clothes or loud beats are more often than not only cosmetics. If an age-specific distinction exists at all for these young people, it probably has most to do with their being more confident than the grown-ups because, as Aristotle said, "They haven't had much opportunities yet to be repeatedly wronged"(108).

Chapter III

TO ADULTHOOD THROUGH WORK

When I think back I can't even think what sort of person I was at school - I think I was just nothing. I don't remember whether I had a personality or not. But now I know. You know, you feel better about yourself, more aware about yourself - A young worker in Australia(1).

1. YOUTH AND THE LABOUR MARKET

What is almost surprising about young people in the labour market is not so much that they are unemployed - the media and official statements have saturated the public with youth unemployment - but to realise how many are at work(2). By the end of the 1970s youth employment/population ratios for the 15 to 19 age group varied from appproximately 20 to 55 per cent across OECD Member countries. For 20 to 24 year-olds, between 70 and 85 per cent typically were employed(3).

With the exception of a few countries such as Sweden and the United States, labour market participation rates for younger males and females decreased steadily, in some OECD countries spectacularly (as in Japan). For males this has usually meant a corresponding increase in their participation rates in education. For girls, the change has often been distributed between school attendance and domestic life. With few exceptions, by the end of the 1970s, patterns of labour force participation were similar for young teenage males and females. The distribution of unemployment rates remains strikingly different, however. Despite varying levels of teenage unemployment and participation rates in different OECD countries, girls tend to have higher rates of unemployment than boys.

Labour force participation rates for 20 to 24 year-olds show a less consistent pattern. While males have decreased their rate in most countries (or remained stationary in some), young women, with very few exceptions such as in France, have substantially increased their presence in the labour market, at the expense of their more traditional domestic activities. Women in this age

group have not reached levels of participation of males, although the gap in the rate could be as little as 1 or 3 per cent in countries like the United Kingdom. Small unemployment differences exist between males and females, although young women usually have higher levels than young men, with the differences varying from almost none (Japan) to 8 per cent (France).

In sum, younger adolescents and girls are less likely to be in the labour market and more likely to be unemployed when they do seek work than their elders and boys, although the differences between males and females are in many cases quite small. Perhaps most striking are the large numbers of young people in the labour force at any one time, and the even larger numbers likely to be working over a period of time.

The raw data, even when related to broader economic changes and demographic patterns, tell us something about the experience of youth, but they do not tell us much about how youth perceive the situation - their satisfactions and frustrations or their investment in work - or about the ways they make choices about work.

Neither extensive nor systematic evidence exists about how young people choose to participate in the labour market. As we have seen, at least part of the decision is based on the perception that life in school is a frustrating, boring, and irrelevant struggle. Once young people move from that view to look for a job, the majority of them rely more on their own initiatives and the informal network of personal contacts rather than on available placement services.

This is how young Belgians, for instance, search for their first job. A 1976 enquiry reveals that 64 per cent of them found employment by personal initiative, 25 per cent with the assistance of family, friends and acquaintances, 7 per cent through the school and 3 per cent through a placement agency(4). Similarly, a 1975 French survey found that the top two positions in the list of "helpers" were occupied by the informal support group (50 per cent of respondents) and personal applications (25 per cent); response to advertisements, placement centres and the school were not chosen by more than 5 to 10 per cent of the youngsters surveyed(5). Almost identically the young Italians surveyed in 1977 indicated that their search for employment was based on contacts and personal initiatives, ranking eight times higher than either small ads or job placement agencies(6).

The absence of formal external assistance, whether by choice or by necessity, in the search for employment seems to characterise also the first contacts of young people with the work place, where they often encounter no reception arrangements and no gradual initiation into work on the part of employers who rather expect other formal systems, usually the school, to provide them with an immediately productive worker. This has been found to be a common expectation of Swedish employers, for example, who, when complaining of the undisciplined behaviour of their 16 and 17 year-old workers, regret that schools have not succeeded in

what they see to be a function of education, namely "to imprint on the young a sense of what working life looks like and demands"(7). Belgian(8) and Australian(9) employers have similarly expressed the view that the school must be responsible for inculcating satisfactory work behaviour.

Whatever the difficulties experienced in the transition from school to work, however, they do not lead to unduly negative attitudes towards the job. As discussed earlier, today's youth, when employed, tend to remain at their jobs. High turnover rates of four or more job changes in a year are usually limited to very unskilled positions(10) and to certain countries such as the United States or Australia(11).

The majority of the youth surveyed by the Third World Survey declared themselves to be "satisfied" or "more or less satisfied" with their job. A recent French enquiry reveals that young workers remember their first work experience as essentially interesting (78 per cent respondents), feel they were rapidly accepted by the older workers (81 per cent), and continue to perceive their work as agreeable (76 per cent)(12).

When asked about their jobs, young people say they are relieved to be out of school and in the work force, out on their own, making money, being responsible. Some Canadians, just having ended their secondary schooling, speak for large numbers of others: "I feel so free this year. In school you have to listen and write down what they say. Now I can move at my own speed and get paid for it" ... "I like to catch on quick so I can do things myself and no one has to tell you" ... "I have confidence now. I can do the job. I was nervous at school(13).

But young people also complain about their jobs. They object to "early rising, travel, heavy physical work, monotonous work or pressure on the job"(14). They speak of the mismatch between educational qualifications and job requirements, of having to gain more educational credentials than are needed for the work, an especially strong view among higher education graduates who expect to have to accept "lower level jobs" in the future.

Nonetheless, despite their complaints, young people's perceptions of work are positive. Despite jobs that are poorly paid, are boring, often show little future opportunities, and are usually insecure, youth believe in the work they do. Why?

No easy generalisations can be made in reply to this question, but there is a number of possible answers. The hope for improvement might be leading young people to accept jobs they see as only a temporary step on the upward ladder. Or, they may be accepting of the conditions attached because of the spectre of unemployment. The approval of their employment circumstances might also be the size of emotional detachment rather than an investment in their work. It is easier to accept shortcomings one is indifferent about.

Yet it is also clear that something else is occurring. Young people seem surprisingly positive even about jobs that by most evaluators' standards are poor jobs. Why becomes clearer when they are asked to give reasons for their sympathetic attitudes towards their jobs. They consistently frame their answers, not in terms of the intrinsic characteristics of the jobs, nor even in terms of monetary rewards, although both are referred to, but on the relative - and great - advantages their work experience has over their school experience. The "exercise of autonomy", the "strong positive feedback to self", the "good feeling of being part of a team the value of whose work is recognized and appreciated", even the "enjoyment of learning" are often mentioned(15, 16).

A singular question remains, however: will the work romance experienced at the beginning of full-time employment be sustained by working conditions that may not in themselves be rewarding? Youth trapped in low level jobs may start experiencing their working environment in much the same way they experienced school. Feelings of boredom and alienation may succeed the initial positiveness and they may seek more time outside the institution. Their practice of absenteeism at this point could resemble the truancy and the lack of participation of their school days.

We should thus be careful in assessing young people's perceptions of employment. The overwhelming emphasis of studies in this field has been on the very early years in the labour force, limiting conclusions about the consequences of underemployment and lack of career development for young people's motivation to work. Previously jobs were believed to lead somewhere; in money terms, but often in terms of the quality of working life and prestige as well. With the general deterioration of the economy and the growth of unemployment, doubts have emerged as to the accuracy of this expectation; the reality we may soon be confronting is the breakdown of the "upward career chain". The consequences may be alarming, both in terms of behaviour and attitudes to employment. A society that fails to provide opportunities to exploit one's talents and holds out little or no prospect of doing so in the future is hardly the best nurturing environment for developing involved and responsible citizens. Gathering more data on these matters would allow verification of such tentative conclusions; the data might even alter the terms of the debate. In any event, it would allow us to ascertain how schooling affects perceptions towards work - apparently enhancing those perceptions - and how work itself over time may be the most serious obstacle to good work habits.

2. THE EXPERIENCE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

"I'm disappointed" ... "I feel useless and unnecessary" ... "I feel diminished" ... "What is hard to take is to be a burden to one's parents, to live off public money. Registering as unemployed makes one feel a beggar." - Unemployed youngsters, Belgium(17).

The positive way young people grab onto employment suggests that having a job is more than simply a way to earn a living or starting on the way to financial security. There are strong reasons for believing that employment is essential to most people's psychological well-being, to health and to acceptance as legitimate members of the community. Lack of employment can then be expected to damage one in far more than strictly financial terms. These kinds of consideration, confined to academic dissertations in times of prosperity, acquire particular salience when a country's economy slackens and employment is no longer available to all those who want it.

For the young, unemployment has always presented a special dilemma. On the one hand, they are not generally expected to be at work; increasingly in the post-war era, they are supposed to be at school. So, both employment and unemployment should be of minimal concern for young teenagers, and to most in their late teens it should not be a problem either. Additionally, young people are not supposed to have family responsibilities. Youth is a time for experimentation; that they receive less wages, are in and out of jobs should not be seen as a serious problem. As they grow older and take on family responsibilities, the issue, of course, becomes greater; but by then they are ceasing to be youthful.

That is one side of the picture, but there has always been another. Many youngsters are in fact in the labour market. Many provide income for their parental families; others for families they have just established themselves. Because the young are seen to be still in the process of forming their attitudes and behaviours, unemployment after having had a job can lead to disillusion with work, or instill erratic work behaviours that are likely to be individually and socially damaging when they become adults. And, young people out of work present a potential core of social disrupters, available for protest and agitation.

These two pictures of youth unemployment have hung side by side for most of the twentieth century, but it looks as though, in many countries, the latter is now the truer to life as the problem of youth unemployment becomes more widespread and vastly more complex. The fear now is that the condition of unemployment may be undermining a positive transition to adulthood. In all this, three groups of young people are especially affected: unskilled and early school leavers, middle class school stayers, and girls.

a) Unskilled school leavers

Unskilled youngsters (however defined) are consistently identified as the priority concern in formulating policies for the unemployed. The category is not synonymous with other categories but it does overlap them: "young people who are hard to employ", "unemployed youth from low socio-economic status families", or simply "disadvantaged youth". The attention of policy-makers has focused particularly on these youngsters because of both their high visibility in unemployment statistics and the serious threat to social stability they are believed to represent.

The lack of jobs available to them is the first condition they face. But many of these young people also lack skills - of both a technical nature and more general literacy - and bring to the labour market assumptions and behaviour that are inimical to their being offered jobs.

For example, notwithstanding the heavy employment handicaps resulting from living in certain localities, the majority of young people from low socio-economic backgrounds quite often refuse to move by more than a very few miles to secure better employment. Most young people interviewed in a recent Australian study reported that they were "unwilling to travel long distances to work: many did not want to travel beyond the local area, while few were prepared to travel further than the city metropolitan area or more than one trip on public transport"(18). In a study of the young French workers, 80 per cent were found to have confined their job search to the immediate neighbourhood(19). Basically similar attitudes are shared by young people in Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom(20).

Why these young people seemingly wanting jobs but trapped in unemployment are unwilling to move is puzzling. It suggests that they do not see the condition as permanent or, alternatively, that they do not believe they can do much about it.

The latter is likely. Many of these unskilled school leavers lack clear career plans when they turn their backs on the education system. In this, they parallel the employment expectations and the labour history of their elders - a lifetime of unattractive jobs that reinforce the social and economic forces already turning them into the unfailing occupiers of the lower levels of employment, the perseverant tenants of unemployment registers. Apathy and acquiescence accompany these youngsters as they respond passively to their experience. Why take initiatives when one feels out of control over one's life? Why try when confidence in oneself is not that great? Where to find the strength to overcome the impediments when there is little in the surrounding community to inspire it?

The irony is that many unemployed young people perceive the problem to lie in themselves; they apply an individualistic ethic to unemployment. When talking about their situation, a number of them in Sweden described it as hopeless and meaningless, but they also saw themselves as the one to blame(21). Another Swedish study covering a larger sample of young people, both employed and jobless, confirms these impressions. Having or not having a job does not change the assumption that what you get is what you deserve. About 48 per cent of those surveyed believed that everything depended on the individuals themselves, 22 per cent said that society was responsible, and about 32 per cent thought that the responsibilities were shared between the two(22). Similarly, the young jobless surveyed in Germany also believed that unemployment was a consequence of individual failure, that whoever really looks for work will be able to find a job(23). A large-scale survey of other German youth, when asked to indicate who among employers, unions, public authorities and the unemployed

themselves could contribute more to the solution of the problem, put employees and public authorities first, but 37 per cent of the respondents thought that the unemployed also could contribute a lot to resolving the problem, and 48 per cent thought they could contribute at least a little. Only 15 per cent of the youngsters interviewed thought that the young unemployed could do nothing at all to help themselves(24).

For the unskilled unemployed, there is something ironic about these views. The belief that one could do something about one's unemployment is probably right. Acting on the belief that one can shape one's destiny undoubtedly heightens the likelihood of moving from unemployment to employment. But the strength of the individualistic ethic does not seem to lead to entrepreneurial and aggressive activities in the labour market. Indeed, passivity is pervasive. The irony is compounded by the reality that young people who leave school early and are without skills have difficulties in getting jobs, especially, as is often the case, when they live in localities where unemployment for youth and adults is high. Believing that one can do something about one's situation turns out neither to lead to group efforts to demand that employment be made available nor to individualistic efforts to break the barriers of unemployment.

b) Middle class school stayers

For middle class school stayers, the situation is somewhat different. On one level, educational qualifications and middle class origins do not seem to shelter youngsters from the problem of unemployment. A recent American study shows that the number of years spent in education that differentiated the employed from the unemployed population in 1959 (a median of 12 years against 9.9 years) had become meaningless by 1971 (a median of 12.4 years against 12.2 years)(25). Unemployment statistics in OECD countries include a significant number of upper secondary and further education graduates, with some countries (such as Italy) showing alarming levels of unemployment even among higher education degree holders.

Not much has been done by policy-makers to improve the employment prospects of these youngsters. And yet there are signals warning that of all youth this group is the one most likely to react "badly" to the current economic situation and to become actively anti-social.

No systematic data are yet available on the personal reactions to unemployment of these young people, but some evidence suggests that serious problems are developing. The growing diffusion of drug consumption among the post-compulsory school population is a phenomenon now familiar in several countries. Advanced degree holders have been found in German statistics on "anti-social behaviour"(26). A recent Japanese survey shows that the criminal juvenile offender in 1977 was most likely to be a student (72 per cent) of lower (31 per cent) or upper secondary schools (36 per cent), whereas the unemployed - mostly unqualified youth - were represented by only 10 per cent of the sample(27).

It is possible to interpret these data as a reaction to the social and economical situation that has brought increased and largely unexpected hardships to their lives. These youngsters belong by and large to social classes encouraged to subordinate immediate gains to the principle of "delayed gratification". They were promised social mobility and, they believe, a guaranteed acceptance into (at least) their class of origin. This, as we have seen, was the social contract that sustained many from the middle class during their advanced education and period of deferred responsibilities.

The current economic crisis has confused their situation enormously, for if extended education and training are no longer certain to lead to positive outcomes in the labour market, what is the rationale for staying in school or delaying various gratifications? In short, for the first time since the war, young people from the middle classes are increasingly faced with the feelings of powerlessness and lack of control over their lives that have been a feature of lower socio-economic class life for a very long time. They lack the individual characteristics that make their less privileged peers assume more readily the responsibility for their own situation. They can reason in terms of labour market and economic policies, they are more willing to move, and they have been trained to be more critical and more assertive.

Faced with the unfamiliar and stress-provoking situation of unemployment, or with the frustration of having achieved uselessly high educational levels (the phenomenon of underemployment is a growing reality) these youngsters might well react in ways society cannot afford. The persistent phenomenon of political terrorism in several countries and the rising levels of criminality and drug abuse among these very people are perhaps warning signs that policy-makers should consider carefully when deciding how to design their interventions in the field of youth unemployment and employment.

c) Girls

The problem of unemployment for girls does not turn their higher rates of joblessness - indeed, unemployment between the sexes does not vary very significantly. The problem lies, rather, in the tendency to dismiss female unemployment as unimportant.

Traditional attitudes suggest that less of a stigma is attached to unemployed girls by their families or by society in general. When prevented from assuming the role of a worker, a girl can still fall back on her traditional occupations: being a wife, a mother or simply a help in the parents' home are still perceived as perfectly legitimate ways of life. Paradoxically, finding oneself unemployed may be the result of the very same factors, i.e. sex stereotyping by families, schools and employers, that allow for the "softened" perception of unemployment's importance.

Explicit data on how female unemployment is perceived are scarce. The evidence is patchy, and often ambiguous. But indirect data exist suggesting that less pressure is exerted on girls by the surrounding adult community to find employment than on boys. The reluctance of families to see their daughters registered as unemployed has been indicated recently by an Australian author(28) as one of the reasons behind the observed increase in enrolment of girls in upper secondary education in that country (a rise that contrasts with the trend for Australian boys since the early 1970s). The lack of parental empathy for girls' employment situations in some German areas has been found at times to be influential enough to force girls to give up jobs or apprenticeships because "they were needed at home to look after younger siblings"(29). The traditional sex stereotypes found time and again to be significant barriers to women's employment tend in certain cases to be shared not only by the employers or the family, but by the boys and the girls as well(30). Female occupational plans are often shaped early by expectations of family life - especially child-rearing necessities - while boys' plans are usually not. Manpower statistics show women are much more likely than men to be in part-time rather than full-time jobs. In short, the labour-related decisions of girls, whether in education or in the labour market, remain by and large "feminine", oriented towards familial domestic duties as well as towards labour market achievement.

Do these kinds of considerations suggest that unemployment might result in less personal cost to girls than to boys? Are these adequate grounds to identify in domesticity an additional shelter open solely to young women to alleviate at least some of the effects of joblessness?

The evidence is ambiguous. The persistence of "feminine" choices in schools and work may, but does not necessarily, mean that employment is less important to a woman's well-being than to a man's. When deprived of work, girls do not define themselves as "househelp" but as downright "unemployed". Moreover, their participation in the labour market is rising steadily in most OECD countries; in some it has already reached male levels. This suggests that many women are establishing working identities.

To solve the puzzle of what unemployment - and for that matter, employment - means to girls, would require asking them; but few researchers have done this in a consistent manner. Female samples are too frequently under-studied; in part, investigators often say, because girls and young women are difficult to approach, less likely to be available where boys typically are, say, in public places, pubs, recreational areas or, more simply, the streets.

If unemployed girls could be consulted, we speculate they would depict a portrait of joblessness not very dissimilar from that drawn by boys. A few of them would view unemployment as an opportunity to be lazy, a justification for doing nothing, as some boys do(31); but for the majority it would evoke the depressing feeling of being useless and rejected by society. They would

reveal anxiety about not finding work or having money; some would admit to the disturbing feeling of being different from the others - "those who work"(32).

Unemployed girls, like unemployed boys, are not likely to convert social isolation and loss of self-esteem into a defence of the culture of leisure. Rather than solace that freedom from work might suggest, there is boredom and barrenness, the characteristics of daily life once job-seeking efforts have led to discouragement and the unpleasantness of being told there is nothing available.

Youth unemployment as it affects the three groups we have mentioned - the unskilled social leavers, the middle class school stayers, and girls - should not be treated lightly. The financial losses involved, the possible impairment to subsequent working careers, the debilitating effects of being considered less worthy than others, the suspicion that our youthful hopes were groundless are serious concerns indeed.

Simply chastizing the young, demonstrating "a lack of tolerance, sympathy or even understanding of the personally devastating effect of unemployment", is unlikely to resolve what are complex and troubling dilemmas. Complaining that they are lazy and unwilling to work to justify the evils of youth unemployment(33) misses the point, and belies the fact that so many young people look forward to working. The young unemployed themselves are often no more fair or generous in assessing their plight. If adults find the young to blame, the young in many countries blame the foreign workers who "should be sent back where they belong", the older workers who "should retire much earlier than they do", or the married women who "should not be allowed to return to the labour market"(34).

The young unemployed are not restless warriors themselves. Most of them do not seem to be about to radicalise society. But we should not be lulled by the passive way in which many of them appear to react to their own unemployment, for the problem may be accentuating ungenerous trends in the population. Unemployment deprives youth of what it needs most: an environment "in which rapid growth to adulthood can occur"(35). Persisting joblessness - or underemployment - for a part of the population, can go further than that. It can corrode the very social fabric of our societies.

3. THE POTENTIAL OF "WORK EXPERIENCE" PROGRAMMES

We had study visits, but we only looked on ... It is more fun to have (practical) vocational orientation than to have lessons, but real working life is more difficult ... - Voices of youth, Sweden(36).

Through various work activities, I came to realise that, since I will be living in society, I too have to do my share in playing some social role. Through work in work experience activities, I realised the importance of responsibility and co-operation, and school life becomes richer and more pleasant because there were more chances to talk about things with my friends and teachers - Voices of youth, Japan(37).

No educational response to the labour-related needs of youth and to the related pedagogical problem of providing job-specific knowledge and general understanding of the labour market has been more prominent in recent years than work experience programmes. As well, projections for the 1980s suggest they may become even more important.

Their potentially direct bearing on economic and industrial relations makes them a favourite topic for political debate; their factual work content makes them particularly appealing to youth. Their specific closeness to the world of work makes them potentially valuable for conveying plausible educational messages to their young clients. Their involvement in real work is designed to give participants a headstart on job skills, increasing job prospects.

Compared to this wealth of promises, available assessments of the actual impact of these programmes on youth are disappointingly limited. While descriptive material abounds, systematic evaluative studies are scarce - they reflect only a small minority of the programmes at work - and they are often poorly constructed. It is thus impossible to be more than tentative about what work experience educational programmes might mean. Nonetheless, some of the main issues can be identified and working hypotheses generated as a basis for further study.

Most descriptions of work experience programmes state their objectives fairly clearly. A circular from the Department of Education and Science of England and Wales is typical:

> The principle which should underlie any work experience scheme is that pupils should be given an insight into the world of work, its disciplines and relationships. This principle would not be satisfied by arrangements made whether in school or elsewhere, whose purpose was specifically or mainly to assess individuals for particular forms of employment, or to occupy pupils in producing articles for sale. Schemes should include provision within the school curriculum for preparation before the pupils take part in work experience and for follow-up and discussing the experience gained(38).

The label work experience is usually applied to those programmes where young people experience work tasks in work environments without, however, acquiring the full identity of workers; they are "employed" on a short-term basis and are not usually paid by the "employer"(39).

Examples of these schemes are numerous. Extended experience of three to six days in different work places (Schnupperlehre - literally "a sniff of learning") are available in certain cantons of Switzerland. Similar schemes are run by the Austrians, in "give it a try" one-week apprenticeship schemes. The Danish education authorities have developed a range of experiences in industries involving two weeks of the last two years of compulsory schooling. The Norwegian "Alternative Training" programme similarly offers to pupils in the last two years of compulsory education the possibility of taking part in the working life of enterprises for one or two days a week. Other examples exist in virtually all Member countries.

A second form of work experience can be labelled work observations, where work environment but not work tasks are made accessible to the pupils. The usual form these schemes take is a series of visits to work places where sometimes the youngsters are allowed to "shadow" older workers by following them around during the working day. Work observation programmes are more easily implemented than work experience schemes. When not a complement, they constitute a widespread alternative to them.

A number of other variations of work experience programmes such as work simulation schemes exist, where work tasks are experienced away from work environments and which involve the creation of work situations in schools. Less well known are link courses, where senior school pupils spend part of their time out of school in vocational colleges or factory schools which are also attended by young people already in the labour force. Here the opportunity to work alongside workers and to learn and understand their views occurs within a college or school rather than a work situation.

In addition to programmes aimed at youth still in school, every Member country offers an array of programmes directed at unemployed youth(40). Unlike education-based measures, however, these schemes do not usually offer anything beyond specific skills to their clients. Their prime concern is lack of employment, their prime solution is skill training. Educational objectives, when introduced at all, are haphazardly and inconsistently added.

The only exception to this list of programmes providing training experience in community settings, in sheltered workshops or on employer premises are certain schemes that have recognised that some of the needs of these young people are other than job-specific. "Life and Social Skills" is the usual self-explaining label associated with these programmes.

What is extraordinary about the wide variety of work-oriented programmes is how consistently young people express satisfaction, even enthusiasm for them. They do so at all levels of schooling, and include those who have participated in higher education schemes(41). A few figures from the United Kingdom strongly endorse this. Project Trident, for instance, was a work experience scheme which, in 1975, had had 252 participants. Of these, no less than 91 per cent declared that it had been both

useful and enjoyable(42). Another study of 103 young people found that 79 per cent of them had "positively enjoyed" the work experience schemes they had attended(43). Ninety-four per cent of those enrolled in a Job Creation Programme called "Springboard Sunderland"(44) said their experience was so good that they would recommend it to their unemployed friends(45). Other evaluations of Work Experience Programmes in the United Kingdom(46) indicate an expressed satisfaction among younger participants that oscillates between 5 and 60 per cent. Many of those who were dissatisfied were older and had already been in regular employment(47). In the United States, some secondary school students (and their parents) interviewed about their "experience-based career education" programmes express similarly high levels of satisfaction(48).

When pressed, the young people in these programmes give a variety of reasons for their satisfaction. Many believe that by being in them their chances of finding employment are increased. Only slightly less frequently they claim that the experience has helped them make better vocational choices or has boosted their self-confidence in looking for a job and holding it.

This is the opinion of the pupils participating in "link courses" who say they get to know the existence of further education possibilities, and which ones they prefer before they leave school. Other studies of school-based work experience programmes find between 40-60 per cent of the pupils claim that the experience has helped them make better career or job choices(49).

A better chance of getting jobs and improved self-confidence is also claimed for work experience programmes by the "Springboard" unemployed youngsters to whom we have just referred. Even if their reasons for entering the schemes have been mostly negative ones - nothing better to do - most of those in the British Work Experience Programmes share the feeling that the placement objectives of the experience had been met (80 per cent of respondents) and that their confidence had been increased by participating in the programme (82 per cent)(50). Youngsters in the Australian Education Programme for Unemployed Youth (EPUY) believe they have increased control over their own lives, their level of human relationship skills, and their self-esteem(51).

Although, as we have seen, young people are positive about these programmes, there still remains the thorny question of how well their perceptions match with the benefits they actually receive. The answer to this is not easy to find, in part because the evaluative data are inconclusive and in part because the best way to define outcomes is unclear.

Certainly, to the extent that young people manifest positive assessments, say they are happier in work experience programmes than in regular school programmes, and claim to be learning more, the programmes must be evaluated as satisfactory. There is some evidence, moreover, of a "spillover" effect. Programmes that are work-oriented and promise some concrete "payoff" sometimes

increase motivation to learn more academically-oriented material; for example, interest in reading may be enhanced(52). Some evidence suggests that upper secondary school link programmes in Japan have led to increased independence and creativity among students, and greater realism about working. Analysing a number of programmes in the United Kingdom, a recent report concludes:

> The investigation found that school-based factory projects embraced a wide area of activity, ability and experience, involving greater scope than had, at first, been anticipated. For example, two mixed secondary schools in Lincolnshire undertook experimental programmes involving production line projects and demonstrated that the approach was feasible for both boys and girls, while in North Wales a low ability school leavers' class in one school became motivated and industrious for the first time when given the opportunity to produce articles as a viable commercial undertaking(53).

Moving on to the question whether those who have participated in these programmes stand a "better chance to get a job", one gets a more dubious response. It is correct to say that many people - more than the majority - find employment when leaving the programmes. Figures around 60 or 70 per cent are not difficult to find across the studies. When controls are introduced, however, the optimism inspired by these numbers seems to subside. A recent German study finds that former participants in work experience programmes are equally represented statistically among both employed and unemployed youth(54). Similar results have been obtained for Scottish school leavers(55). It is interesting to note that independently organised part-time work seems to facilitate further employment somewhat more than the work experience programmes(56).

At the same time, many work experience programmes, especially ones that involve actual work tasks performed on-the-job, are viewed with suspicion by unions and are often treated by employers as more of a nuisance than they are worth. It is not clear, moreover, how much learning occurs when simple tasks are repeated over and over again, or when work observation programmes require young people to watch workers for brief periods during the school year. The actual experience of work that pupils receive is often brief, and their vocational perspectives, far from being widened by the experience, run the danger of being narrowed(57).

As we have noted already, many of the programmes appear to be implemented with little preparation; visits to work places are ill-timed, unprepared for, and lacking in any systematic follow-up. In many cases, too, there is insufficient guidance(58). A "tracking" function is also apparent in the programmes: lower class boys are prepared for the lower class jobs they would ordinarily be expected to get; girls are given work experience in the women's jobs they would likely end up in anyway.

This latter point re-appears in the application of work experience programmes in most Member countries to only a small minority of pupils. When they exist at all, the programmes belong to the optional rather than the compulsory curriculum. Other interests and exam pressures keep most of the academically-oriented pupils from participating. The usual result, then, is that these schemes touch only that minority of the school population who are already in academic "trouble". If participation were more explicitly encouraged or required to extend to a majority, the programmes might be legitimised, but the hypothetical advantages they might provide towards getting a job would correspondingly diminish.

On all these grounds, it seems that while the enthusiasm of young people towards the programmes is encouraging, it should not lead to overly optimistic projections about what they are actually accomplishing. As a recent report puts it, work experience programmes "tread a narrow line between a number of traps."

> [Work experience programmes] aim to provide experiences as close as possible to "real work". On the other hand, they must not make a sufficient contribution to productivity to encourage unions to press for payment of full wages, or employers to substitute work experience trainees for the existing labour force. One way of avoiding these dangers is to move the trainees regularly from department to department, but this limits the "realism" of their experience. Moreover, because the trainees are not being paid by the sponsor, and only have [on current data] a [limited] chance of being taken on there, close attention must be given to preparing them to move on elsewhere; yet this [limited] chance is a key component of the "success" of the scheme, and too much attention to "exit" needs may undermine it(59).

But whatever the numerous and real pitfalls separating the promises of work experience programmes from their achievements, it should not discourage the positive development of these kinds of schemes. Young people like them. They constitute a unique channel of communication between the world of work and youth in general, especially for those who have rejected formal educational methods and institutions. They give, too, much greater visibility to the link between school and work. So, even with their current ambiguities and conflicts, they deserve to be explored and developed - but without the naive or simplistic assertions that too often get attached to them.

4. EMERGING TRENDS AND ISSUES

We should be clear that the problems of education and work involve more than simply what young people do or do not do in school. Involved, too, are a host of economic, social and demographic trends over which young people have little influence, and which shape their experiences in school and in the labour

market. Other factors are familial, social class, racial and gender conditions that shape school and work experiences, and indeed, the concept of youth itself as a period of preparation for adulthood. Nor should young people's own perceptions be the only basis upon which social and educational policy decisions are developed.

Yet given all of this, the voices of the young do offer reference points to understanding what their lives are like, and what they would like to see them be like. When they speak of the issues of education and work, they are, as we have seen, nearly unanimous.

One possible way of responding to these expressions is to structure "alternation" into the process of growing up. As a recent French investigation has shown, a large number of young people declare their interest in alternating regular employment experiences with training periods in educational establishments (71 per cent of respondents). Most of these youngsters would like the training to be congruent with their previous education (56 per cent of respondents), but the others see alternation in a broader sense. One in two of those interviewed say they would rather train for some other occupation or even for something not necessarily related to any job(60). Others prefer alternation programmes in which "your studies are spread out over several periods alternating with jobs directly connected with them"(61). Upper secondary Swedish pupils express the same opinion(62).

Australian apprentices and student nurses also have positive views about alternating school and work, as a recent study confirms. The things that stood out most clearly in their life experiences so far were these: the clarity of their vocational goals, and the steps intended for achieving them; the fact that they were working with people, growing in competence, confidence, and being useful, all of which gave the feeling that they had found their niche in society or at least a niche that gave them a start - and so contributing towards the formation of a sense of personal identity. They were conscious, too, of combining learning with working, theory and practice, which almost invariably they compared favourably with school. They found, as a student nurse said, that "the theory teaches you and the practical side gives you the time to put it into practice and learn it properly"(63).

The practice of alternating learning and working is centuries old in countries where apprenticeship is an established and honourable route to working life. What is new, or might be new depending on the model adopted, is its formalisation within organised and institutionalised educational periods. Acceptance of the idea is fairly widespread among young people. Those who have formally experienced it express noticeable satisfaction. Those who informally and independently engage in work while at school do not seem to be taken aback by the experience either. In fact, this latter form of "voluntary" alternation of school and work looms much larger in today's society than such work experience as is available through institutional channels.

In Norway, where about 138,000 pupils and apprentices received one or the other form of vocational practice in 1980, the initiative of the country's young people in participating in employment was estimated to "far exceed the contacts organised by the school"(64). In 1979 in Australia, over 60 per cent of all teenage part-time workers were school students, mostly between 15 and 17(65). In Sweden, almost one in two youngsters between 16 and 19 combines studies with employment(66). More specifically, a 1979 report by the National Board of Education evaluates at 33 per cent the proportion of pupils in the 3- and 4-year lines of upper secondary education who are also engaged in some kind of paid activity. In the United States the proportion may even be higher.

When discussing how best to "open the school to the world of work" the phenomenon of the student-worker is often ignored. Its growing prominence suggests, however, that more attention should be paid to it by those responsible adults planning to introduce "work experience" into the lives of pupils, many of whom are already experiencing work. Certainly, much more needs to be known about this phenomenon, its consequences and implications for school life and organisation. Hopefully such new knowledge would be found and put to use before the "official" ignorance of the phenomenon introduces yet another alienating component into educational policies.

As we have seen, official and unofficial work experience programmes are currently multiplying in Member countries. Though introduced with the best of intentions many of them are not followed by an adequate evaluation. Less "official" programmes escape any evaluation whatsoever. Both types, however, are of potential benefit to the young and it would seem that adequate resources should be provided to study their effects.

At the same time greater efforts are needed to reach those for whom work experience programmes are intended, namely the potential school failure or the already unemployed. In practice, the presence of this group among the recruits is not as large as would be expected. In addition to the episodic rejection of applicants by schools and employers(67), a common finding is that, if there is not a thorough search by the officers in charge, the youngsters most in need escape recruitment. Their reluctance to take part in programmes not leading directly to jobs explains only part of their absence. As important in their lack of participation is their ignorance of what is available. A study in the State of New York found that no more than one in four had any awareness of employment training programmes, while concrete knowledge about the programmes was held by less than one in five of the youngsters interviewed(68). Similar results were found in Australia where early leavers frequently knew little about the offerings in technical and further education(69). Some knew of the existence of the programmes but lacked the self-confidence and assurance to look for courses and join them.

The more the information gathered on the efficiency of these programmes, the more it becomes clear that not only technical needs require coverage. The attitudinal and motivational difficulties of teenagers are important indicators of subsequent employment problems. They are important factors, too, in entry into and success at potentially beneficial training and education programmes. Lack of positive self-image or of adequate self-confidence have a strong bearing on unemployment(70) and overcoming these is essential for a brighter future(71). It would seem, therefore, that they have a strong claim for consideration by the planners of these work experience programmes.

The opening up of the curriculum to the world of work, the extension to non-educational bodies of partnership in the development and management of certain sectors of schooling may signify a growing spirit of solidarity at the interface between school, work and community. After a relatively recent historical process whereby families and, most of all, employers have gradually passed on to schools the responsibility to socialise the new generation into adult working roles, the time has perhaps come to renew older practices. The need for substantial change is apparent. Perhaps the silver lining to the present situation is the opportunity it affords us to rethink these fundamental issues and to use measures originally developed in connection with youth employment as a way of introducing long overdue reforms that will benefit not just our young people but everyone else as well.

Chapter IV

YOUTH AND YOUTH POLICIES

1. ELEMENTS FOR A DIAGNOSIS

a) Youth behaviour and attitudes

To the extent that demographic data can shed light on the factors (whether at home, at school or at work) that influence young people as they grow into their own kind of adulthood, the existing statistics certainly reveal some important changes over the last decade.

The most relevant of these changes is a decrease in their aggregated participation in the labour market in most OECD countries, with the notable exception of the United States and Sweden. The expression and effects of this we have already discussed at some length.

A second change, as we have seen, is the apparent increase of 16 to 24-year-olds who do not seem to belong to either education or labour registers. In certain countries, this group seems to be equally large, if not larger, than the unemployed. A third important trend has been an increase in educational choices by young people of shorter lines of vocationally-oriented studies rather than the previous tendency towards greater academic investment. Finally, we have the persistence - in some countries, the increase - in the proportion of young people touched by unemployment.

These trends are apparent to varying degrees in almost all OECD countries, and there are equally important variations in the effects they have had on the countries' youth - distinctions by age, sex, class and race all exist. What we are observing, therefore, reflects a series of pretty complicated developments. Although we have considered them all from various points of view in earlier chapters, it is appropriate here briefly to recapitulate where they have brought us to date.

i) Contrary to what was observed in the 1960s, the young people in the later 70s have no particularly radical approach to society, and they tend to show an

"emotional" distance from political and social institutions. Their larger emotional investments are geared towards fulfilling self-centred needs defined in terms of their close social environment and their family. They are, however, concerned about "ecology", protection of the environment, and nuclear developments.

ii) All groups, irrespective of age, educational qualifications or sex, are worried about the very poor employment prospects. Those from poorer class backgrounds seem to be willing to accept a larger share of the blame personally than their more privileged peers, who more often blame employers and public authorities. Both groups show confusion, uncertainty, even anxiety as to their futures and there is a general feeling of having been "left behind" by society.

iii) Most young people put a high value on work as a fundamental part of adult life, although with it goes a wish that it would be more meaningful and intrinsically rewarding.

iv) The high youth turnover observed in some OECD countries seems to be based on factors other than "refusal to work" as a value held by youth.

v) No fundamental conflicts seem to exist between young people and their close adult communities as to the basic social and cultural values on which one's adult role should be based. Additionally, they generally accept the adult values of their class and their sex.

vi) Notwithstanding the policy efforts to counteract social inequalities or sex discrimination in schools, the educational careers of the late 1970s persist in being strongly biased by class and sex. Girls and boys from less privileged social backgrounds are often subject to a progressive dampening of their educational ambitions and tend to achieve less than others in terms of educational qualifications.

vii) Whatever the length of their educational career, or the level of their achievements, all young people appear to agree that the schools remain divorced from life outside - social or working. Neither the social skills necessary to adulthood nor the subject matter relevant to their employment preoccupations are learned in school.

viii) The element of school life that seems to be the major determinant of decisions to stay on or to leave the education system is the personal and emotional relationship with one's teacher(s). The low achievers and the non-academically minded are naturally the most vulnerable to perceived indifference in this respect and for many of them, the emotional rejection of school is

matched only by their over-evaluation of their first work experience, irrespective of the job's "objective" rewarding characteristics.

b) Youth demands

The single most powerful demand that young people are formulating, implicitly or explicitly, is simply that for adult status, in its most traditional form and, through it, for full integration into society alongside their elders. Their endorsement of the value of work and family in one's life is well in line with the common conception of adulthood achieved through paid employment and familial responsibilities. This desire to integrate into society in conformity with established norms of conduct is expressed by their endorsement of the basic cultural values of their group of origin, class and sex, stereotypes included, as we have reported earlier.

The deprivation of social recognition through lack of work (perhaps the most recognisable badge of adulthood) is what is most sorely felt by the large majority of those young people who are unemployed. They have "chosen" to leave school, and in effect, expect that this will allow them to begin their adult life. Lack of work is a statement that they must continue to delay their adulthood.

The association of full-time employment with adulthood stands in marked contrast to the view of school as a children's institution. To be treated like children is what many young people identify as a major deficiency of schooling, and it stands as a main deterrent to their return to formal education. So, for the minority of each age group who will in fact experience joblessness, concern and anxiety over one's future employment prospects goes far beyond the well-grounded fear of just unemployment itself.

The second most important demand comes from the young people's conviction that they have too little control over their way of life.

It is likely that this perceived lack of power to shape one's future is related to their withholding interest and emotional investment from political and civic affairs in favour of family life or peer group where they can feel quite specific responsibilities.

This feeling of powerlessness probably stems also from their perception of the remoteness of education from the world of work. They see no connection between what they are compelled to learn and the knowledge they feel will be necessary to accede to adulthood, and they are frustrated when they see the value of their educational credentials deflating in the labour market.

2. YOUTH POLICIES AND POLICY DILEMMAS

a) Policy Responses

Few of the policy responses to youth problems(1) seem to have acknowledged their global nature. In particular, the "school and work" issues addressed by education and labour authorities have seldom recognised the concern for social life as a whole that marks youth's explicit demands about schooling and work.

Even less frequently do policy responses include in their diagnosis the difficulties encountered by groups other than the unemployed or the low achievers. The attention of the policy-makers has so far concentrated mostly on those young people whom by their age, socio-economic extraction or educational qualifications are perceived as the most visible and urgent problems of social and political relevance. Those youngsters who are receiving lesser returns for more advanced educational investments, who persist in finding themselves geared to class or sex segregated lines of study, who are lowering their educational and social ambitions in the fear of an uncertain future, who are moving with difficulty in the complex internal differentiation of school courses or in the increasingly segmented labour market, have by and large received a far smaller share, if any, of the recent deployment of public resources and public attention.

Institutional responses to the demands of youth have thus usually been "incomplete". They have addressed themselves at some groups only and aim at solving only some parts of their problems.

Still, a number of the policy efforts have been made in recent years to meet one of youth's complaints - joblessness - by earmarking openings in the public sector, or by providing incentives to hire youth, mostly to private employers, e.g. under the cover of direct payments and/or pay roll tax relief or indirectly by introducing measures such as early retirement to make jobs more readily available to new entrants in the labour market. Another step forward has been the establishment of youth co-operatives and other local development initiatives.

Complementary to the "job creation" approach has been measures to identify young people who experience, or are expected to experience, particular difficulties in integrating into the labour market and to provide them with additional or remedial training in those skills (work-related, social or personal) that should make them more competitive in the job market.

Although still of recent date, the development of these work experience/training/education policy responses can already be seen to have undergone important changes since their first appearance in the mid-70s. At the outset, two strands of public interventions could be identified. One category of provisions, such as the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) in the United Kingdom, the programmes developed under the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) in the United States or the

"Pactes pour l'emploi" in France, were typically manned by non-educational authorities (usually labour authorities), were intended to cover a youth population that has left the formal education system and were structured along learning methodologies and definitions of both teacher and learner quite distinct from those adopted in formal schooling. These work experience/training programmes were in many ways closer to some forms of apprenticeship or adult education than to traditional education courses. Although in some cases there was a return to mainstream education after completion of a programme, the objectives of the organisers and the motivation of the enrollees usually stayed closely linked to employment prospects.

A second strand of youth policies was developed in the 1970s by some education authorities, usually alone, but in some cases in co-operation with other agencies. This consisted basically in extending the educational provisions for young people by adding an optional period of formal schooling (about a year) at the end of the compulsory stream. The target population here was those who had completed their compulsory education but did not intend, or were not qualified enough, to go on to the upper secondary level. Staff was provided by the labour authorities and the content of the programmes was tailored to the employment or apprenticeship needs of the young clients, not as an incentive to return to the educational mainstream. Examples of this kind of measure are the pre-employment courses in Ireland, the "10th year" in Germany and its correlates in the other German-speaking countries, in the "pre-employment" or "pre-apprenticeship" courses in Australia.

Both the job creation/training and the extension of schooling measures were introduced under the assumption that the youth employment problems would be short-term. However, it soon transpired that most of the programmes had only marginal positive effects on subsequent employment and that the youth problems might well outlast any short-term situation. So, in the absence of clear job returns, young people started demanding that this sort of experience be formally qualifying and that youth measures should be extended much further.

Meanwhile, pressures such as the spectre of structural youth unemployment, recurrent demands that school be more relevant to the outside world, the persistent need to intervene in favour of the least able or the hard to employ, prompted OECD countries to initiate a new generation of youth measures, which had two major characteristics in common.

First, "preparation for the world of work" was implanted firmly into the prospectus of formal education, i.e. in the compulsory education where one of the key battles of equality had been won by the introduction of a comprehensive curriculum for all pupils and the dismantling of discriminatory vocationally-oriented alternatives. The Scandinavian countries are currently experimenting with this innovation through a number of weeks of "orientation to work", with earlier intervention visits to work places or short work experiences on the employer's premises spread through the compulsory period of education or concentrated in its

last two years. Other countries are undertaking or considering similar approaches. The question remains open in some cases as to how these parts of the curriculum would relate to pupils' scholastic achievements and planned educational careers; nor is it clear if the change will open the way for the reintroduction of long-contested discriminatory practices in compulsory education.

Secondly, some of the "post-compulsory" or "pre-employment" youth programmes have assumed a "new look" that blurs the traditional boundaries between the concerns of the labour and the education authorities, and pays much less attention to the clients' past history - whether at school or in employment. The aim is to create a buffer zone of a few years after compulsory education where all young people delayed in their transition to adulthood should be entitled to either work, education or training. Examples of this can be found in the United Kingdom, where the work-based Unified Vocational Preparation programme has included a larger share of "training" next to the "work" in its curriculum, and the labour-based new versions of the Youth Opportunities Programme is intensifying its training component. France is currently discussing the possibility of a "buffer" zone for all youth, while the Scandinavian countries have been experimenting with it under the "Youth Guarantee" label for a few years. These programmes would allow more choice for youth by providing school, work, or training guarantees.

As promising as the most recent developments are, few of such "youth programmes" can be said to respond to the core of youth demands. Except for the most efficient job creation programmes, these measures cannot avoid perpetuating, even outside the school walls, the status of not-yet-adult bestowed by formal education. Nor can these programmes guarantee that the job experience provided will afford entry to sound employment, and thus to integration in social life.

The problems of an appropriate policy response to youth are compounded by the realisation that "youth" is, in fact, more than a single category. Some young people are never employed or have extreme difficulties finding and holding a job. Some find and keep employment, though perhaps an increasing proportion take jobs with less pay than their educational qualifications seem to justify. Many make an efficient transition to adulthood simply because they persist in the educational, employment, and social tracks of their parents. Many participate in the education system and the work force, but nonetheless fear for their futures; some feel - whether realistically or not - that they have been excluded from the mainstream of society.

In the light of these considerations, the balance sheet of youth policies looks rather bleak. Given the breadth and the complexity of the problems at stake, however, the limitations seemingly besetting such policy interventions are no real surprise. The question to ask is rather whether and how their achievements might be better.

b) Policy dilemmas

As we have just seen, the problems facing planners of youth measures in the last decade turn essentially on recognising what is significant and insignificant, and on what are likely to be persistent or transient issues for the young themselves.

A primary question is whether the main complaints of the young (we have listed them several times) reflect genuine social problems or the ephemeral whims of adolescents? If they are genuine, are they the product of decisions - to prolong schooling for longer and longer periods - that might be reversed? Are the problems the result of larger economic circumstances, e.g. the emergence of limited growth economies or, more specifically, caused by the uncertain relationship between educational credentials and returns in the labour market? Perhaps the problems are not really genuine at all; are they, then, the result of manipulation by the media, by political propaganda, by pressure groups, or a product of scapegoating in a time of trial and uncertainty?

A related question is whether the problems, if genuine, are new. Have the young always complained about their relationship to employment, and about the uncertainty of the future? If they have, is it necessary to engage in new kinds of policies?

Does it make sense even to talk about the problems of youth as if "youth" were a single category? To what extent does the uniformity of youth demands call for a uniformity of responses or is the uniformity only apparent, masking much more significant divisions among young people. If social class, sex, personality characteristics, and educational ambitions divide the young, might the responses also require differentiation, even if the demands are phrased in much the same terms?

Finally, the planner must be satisfied that the demands of youth are amenable to institutional responses. Can public institutions, at present divided among education, labour and other authorities, respond to problems that are too broadly-based for these authorities to cope with? Since so much of youth's attitudes and behaviour is rooted in the family and the social climate around it in all its variety, can institutional agencies, either singly or in groups, respond with the necessary depth and flexibility to ease the transition to adulthood?

If it is correct to assume that public authorities can respond to the deeper problems of youth only with great difficulty, should they even attempt to do so? Is it necessary to expand the concept of youth policy, e.g. by developing Youth Offices or Ministries of Youth to allow for more comprehensive responses? Are the risks of further expanding public responsibility for youth too great?

The balance between what should and could and what should not and cannot be done by public authorities and institutions is difficult to establish. Rejecting all forms of public responsibility is likely to offer little benefits. Simply calling

for a revival of social solidarity and individual responsibilities towards youth is not likely to be sufficient in itself to provide solutions to youth's problems. But a mindless expansion of responsibility does not promise to resolve the problems either.

3. DEMANDS ON THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Most of the policy responses to young people's complaints about the education system have been designed, as we have seen, to improve the school's relationship to the world of work. Almost every Member country has instituted more work-oriented curricula, has expanded vocational education programmes, and has experimented with a variety of work-experience activities.

The success of these policies has varied. Young people who participate in the new programmes are generally positive and urge their continuation or expansion. They claim they have been helped by them. But external evaluations of the programmes have been much more mixed. Only occasionally do they improve employment prospects for those enrolled and rarely do they have a larger impact on unemployment rates.

But even if the programmes were more satisfactorily implemented, questions of at least two kinds would still remain: (i) To what extent should the education system attempt to open itself to the world of work? (ii) If it should, how is it to balance "employment" and "education" demands?

The first question can be put another way: How many more responsibilities should the education system assume? The debate about education for work has tended to focus exclusively on the ways the education system could take on added responsibilities for youth's place in the labour market. It has tended to ignore the more complex - and prior question - of whether it should do so.

Since compulsory education was introduced and especially since secondary education was expanded, education has increasingly been seen as an instrument for social reform. After the battle for social equality - the outcomes of which are still debatable - the problems of youth training for the labour market or youth unemployment have been taken on by educational agencies under both a pressure from outside (schools are perceived as being responsible by youth, families and employers) and from the inside, to strengthen the institutional position of those agencies in the field of social responsibilities.

The emphasis on educational solutions to social problems, in this case youth employment problems, may be misleading the public away from evaluations of where the responsibilities for unemployment and underemployment lie. It may offer a false panacea.

No reform of compulsory education "for the world of work" can create job openings in a slack labour market. No additional provisions for education and training, no expansion of guidance and counselling services can, by themselves, provide a better match between educational qualifications and a fast and independently changing labour market.

Furthermore, it is unclear whether and how much education can become tuned to employment without trading some of the other functions it is presumed to fulfill.

If the objective of education is intended to be broader than to prepare youngsters for working life - to provide knowledge and understanding of oneself and one's place in society - then the dilemmas faced by education involve much more than responsibility for work preparation. In countries where individual life expectancies are rising and the share of people's life devoted to paid employment is decreasing, establishing a list of work and non-work priorities in the educational agenda needs careful consideration.

The second and related question has to do with the extent to which the trend towards education for work conflicts with what we commonly understand as "education" and the responsibilities of educational institutions. The educational changes youth claim they want, making schools more like work, challenges organisational processes of education systems. Youth emphasize not simply work skills and job information; they prefer work because they are given more responsibility, money, the freedom to "move on", the right to experiment. They associate these with adulthood, and they want the school to end its in loco parentis role.

Just as important, young people may be posing an even more fundamental conflict. Learning is an ongoing process, its very essence is that it is incomplete, that with each task learned a new one is immediately confronted. When the young talk about their jobs, they often refer to very different things: the chance to master a task and then not be under constant pressure to master another one. They want completion, not the incompleteness of the learning process.

This is not to suggest that all forms of employment are in conflict with learning. Certainly, mastering new tasks, learning new skills, being challenged by new roles is often a feature of work. But the demand that the education system be heavily directed towards "employability" may mean that some youth - low school achievers, girls, children of lower socio-economic origins - will be treated to an education that is designed less towards literacy, critical awareness, and the exposure to new ideas than to limited job opportunities.

Whatever the answers to these questions, it is clear that the attempts to resolve the problems of youth have already changed the education system. Formal education systems have, in the past, been treated as if they held monopolies on the delivery of

knowledge, the defining of what knowledge was worth, and the assessment of learning. The "opening up" of education to employment concerns has slowly begun to erode this privilege.

The process has been furthered by the growth of training courses by non-educational authorities (agricultural, labour, industrial) and by private bodies. More recently, non-educational criteria have been introduced for access to secondary or even higher education (e.g. age, previous work experience, family responsibilities).

The growth of movements to replace or accompany the front-end model of education with more flexible formulas such as recurrent or adult education enhances these developments. The current proliferation of non-educationally manned ad-hoc provisions for the young unemployed, the introduction of work-based pedagogical approaches throughout formal education under the label of "alternation", can all be seen as elements carrying a potentially high impact on changing some of the administrative, corporative and pedagogical foundations of modern education systems.

4. BETWEEN EDUCATION AND WORK: DILEMMAS OF POLICY FOR YOUTH IN TRANSITION

The first requirement in policy-making for young people at the stage between school and work would seem to be the establishment of a set of priorities responding to the related but different problems they are likely to face in the labour market. In particular, it may be best to think of employment and training policies in terms of social integration, connecting aspirations and expectations to opportunities and social institutions.

At the same time, solutions to the "labour" aspect of youth unemployment have obviously to contend with the objective scarcity of job openings resulting from the economic recession. They must compete with the resistance of organised corporations, such as the unions, defending, as it is their function, their own list of priorities on allocating existing jobs. Without a resumption of economic growth this major obstacle to youth employment and to youth programmes with a strong work component cannot be ignored. Nor can one disregard another major constraint at the macro-economy level: virtually no youth programme has been so far designed which does not draw heavily on the expenditure of public resources. At a time when public sector budgets are coming under severe strain, this constraint remains important and highly visible.

Such solutions have to recognise that the increased segmentation of the labour market and the resulting swelling of the peripheral labour force further complicates the creation of permanent youth employment.

Finally, solutions to youth demands in the economy have to contend with the uncertainty still surrounding the changes in both the structure of employment and skills demand, which are likely to emerge under the impact of the new technologies. Finding permanent room for young people in the labour market and defining clearer specifications as to their training will, therefore, not be easy largely because their needs compete with other priorities. So, the question of what can give way remains open.

If the economy is riddled with internal pressures and needs, at times antagonistic to youth demands, education finds itself in no better position to formulate its own solutions.

The debate on what could - or should - be done through education to alleviate youth problems cannot be pursued without taking into account the pressures on the future developments of other social agencies. The link and interdependence between them is very strong, if not in objectives or operating principles, at least in terms of resources, no longer flexible, and constituencies.

5. PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA FOR REMEDIAL MEASURES

The data on which this report is based reveal how broad and complex are the issues of education and work that young people confront. The questions they must ask themselves, and we must ask about them, are among the most important a society can face:

- How can the demand for adulthood be satisfied in the last decades of the twentieth century?
- What clear indications can be given to the young to guide them through their education and training into meaningful, legitimate and acceptable social identities?
- What are the identities young people can acquire that will enable them to become productive citizens and prevent any from being cast aside?
- What is a young man or woman to do when deprived of work?
- What social role has he or she to fulfill when access to adulthood is delayed?
- What is the economic role of those kept non-economically productive for long periods of time?
- What returns can be identified when what has been promised to youth by education does not materialise? Of what use is education then?

There are no ready answers to these questions. To find them will require rethinking the traditional assumptions about the roads to adulthood, and articulating a set of principles to guide us.

The generally accepted view of the "road to adulthood" is the historical one: it is where one acquires qualifications and credentials via education, training or apprenticeship. The road can be shortened or lengthened, the relative weight of the components can be different across time, countries and individuals. The formula nonetheless is perceived as the only way, the "old" way to approach adulthood. The identity itself will then be bestowed by integration into the labour market and/or the acquisition of family responsibilities. Few dispute that employment remains the main mark of adulthood.

In this respect the various public measures introduced in the 1970s as a consequence of rising youth unemployment are partial responses to the young people's need to be recognised as adults. Rather than offering a new route to adulthood, these measures created a "social space", a buffer zone, where the otherwise unemployed could acquire a social identity, in much the same way that the prolongation of secondary schooling fathered a new social entity. Having lost the socially acceptable identity of pupils or apprentices, intended clients of these programmes were offered socially acceptable roles to give them an identity during their prolonged not-yet-adult status.

At the same time, these programmes have stimulated institutional, administrative and political investments in youth issues across agencies, creating a baseline of information, understanding and awareness that should not be underestimated.

Some of the programmes have shown that pupils can be other than "children" in "children's institutions". By introducing approaches to learning involving alternating school/work strategies, they have shown how the distinction between pupil and worker, in the end between youth and adult, can be moderated.

By introducing the possibility of earning while in an educational course, some of the programmes have opened the way for reuniting learning and earning, still separate trademarks of different age groups. By focusing on the still unresolved needs of the communities, others have highlighted the social importance of different kinds of activities, not necessarily linked to profit. By developing strategies to deal with the diversity of youth needs, others again have drawn attention to the decentralised, fragmented and local aspects of youth's demands, and to the pertinence of expanding local "youth" formulas to the communities as a whole.

A number of the current responses to the demands of the young carry with them elements of social innovation. If followed through, today's efforts to solve the problems of a minority within an age group - many "youth measures" are targeted on the

unskilled, the drop-out or the unemployed - could produce approaches profitable to a larger share of the population, youth included.

Whatever their nature, however, specific policies and programmes should be watched carefully as they proceed, their achievements being assessed against their promises. This, of course, involves enlisting principles and criteria for evaluation. The following appear to deserve consideration:

a) In order to avoid creating a "youth reservation", programmes should not be addressed exclusively to young people, although their content might be especially appealing to them.

b) To avoid perpetuating the brand of "failure" too often borne by the unskilled, all programmes should be open regardless of formal qualifications.

c) In order to dispel the feeling of participants and adults nearby that they are a charge on public welfare, each programme should, as far as possible, be self-financing, in other words it should come as close as possible to being commercially viable.

d) Having regard to the strong desire on the part of young people for social recognition, each programme should be seen as useful and worthy by the community at large, sufficiently so that its hypothetical disappearance would be reacted to with regret.

e) To eliminate the uncertainty inherent in many existing programmes due to the unclear time scale, each programme should be assured of a formula that would remain viable in a recovered or changed economy.

f) To be truthfully a "second" or an "additive" chance to better one's future prospects, each programme should provide formally recognised credits for employment or further education.

These criteria are severe enough to meet some of the main demands of today's youth. On the other hand, they are broad enough to admit a variety of practical designs for remedial or compensatory programmes.

6. SECTORS RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STATISTICAL STUDY

The inadequacy of many recent institutional responses to youth does not mean that no opportunities have been created or that young people will not take advantage of opportunities to smooth the transition to adulthood. Rather it suggests that given the wide market of options available - to stay on (or not) at school,

to select different kinds of programme in the school, to enter training programmes outside, to seek employment, to remain dependent upon one's family, to live in communal settings, to live at public expense, to engage in legal or illegal marginal activities - what the young will choose or reject depends upon a highly complex constellation of social, economic, political and personal factors. Some of these are particularly influential; social class and sex, for example, affect choices, as do regional, economic and labour market conditions.

How exactly all these factors coalesce or will coalesce to influence group and individual decisions remains uncertain. There is little doubt, however, that something near an answer could come through analyses of youth behaviour both systematic and through group studies and, more loosely, by following the development of promising strategies within institutions and in the community. The areas that seem to call most urgently for such attention are the following eight.

i) The demography of youth

Existing demographic data on young people suggest the importance of extending the census to all aspects of their life in a more co-ordinated and comprehensive fashion than hitherto. This would allow a more precise picture to be drawn of today's young people and enable international assessment of the life choices they are making and their possible implications for adulthood.

ii) The pupil/worker

As we have already pointed out, there is a group of young people, growing in size in several countries, who are simultaneously employed part- or full-time, while enrolled at school. The implications of this development for the education system are potentially important in terms of youth's perception of schooling, educational methods, organisation and the teaching profession. Much more needs to be known about it.

iii) Non-registered youth

The second youth group that deserves special attention is the most difficult to establish demographically - those who appear not to be in schools, nor in the labour market, nor in any other formal institution. In some countries their number equals that of the registered unemployed, in others it exceeds it. As we have already pointed out, this intriguing group well deserves study - from a number of different viewpoints.

iv) Youth in the community

A study of "youth in the community" should examine such facets as the role of young people as supporters of their family of origin as well as their own household, their role as consumers, and the legal and administrative facilities (e.g. banking and credit, lodging, travelling) which facilitate their transition into adult roles, even in the absence of employment or schooling.

The study should cover those transitional youth and adult organisations that help young people arrive at an acceptable and legitimate social identity during the delayed transition to adulthood. Implementation of the "education for work" concept should also come into it.

v) School/work alternation

This innovation, which we have already examined at some length, raises a number of questions that still need answering. Among them are whether, for example, work experiences should be compulsory for all pupils; whether they should be optional or compulsory for those who stay at school after compulsory age; whether wages should be attached to such experiences; whether work experiences should be substantial in themselves or treated primarily as devices to enhance literacy and numeracy skills; how credentialling would be affected by such programmes; who would assume organisational oversight; what kinds of teachers would be needed and how would they be trained; would new forms of youth organisations be needed?

vi) The world of work in compulsory education

This study should analyse the various forms taken by the introduction of the world of work into the compulsory period, including "alternation" and the more traditional programmes that bring such material into the classroom. It should evaluate the impact of these programmes on pupil proficiency, motivation to learn, attitudes towards education and work, as well as on the development of their identities as active adults and further educational careers.

vii) Alternatives to post-compulsory schooling

A new and apparently growing generation of post-compulsory education and training programmes have come into existence which, by their recency, are not fully understood. Some of these are managed by education authorities but not necessarily linked to established institutions. They constitute a sort of "sideways" secondary education whose function, management, targeting, curriculum and credentialling are still to be clarified. An in-depth analysis would clarify their potential role as a buffer between school and work.

viii) Changes and innovations in the education profession

The long-term and widely ranging effects on the education profession of the totally new formulae being introduced will certainly be profound. So too is the likely need for new forms of training and perhaps new kinds of professional to help young people reaching adulthood. Among the dilemmas will be how to guarantee the quality of learning experiences in a system of alternative education and work, or more generally, in the development of new or revitalised transitional institutions.

Clarifying the terms of these and kindred problems in as concrete a way as possible is itself a major task to be undertaken, before an attempt is made to formulate resolutions. The list of issues that need to be considered in this connection is an exceedingly long one. The study would depend essentially on the co-operation of all the parties concerned.

Appendix

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The objective of the project was essentially a pragmatical one: to assess, from their own point of view, what the needs of young people were in the spheres of education and work as they grew towards adulthood; and to investigate the extent to which these needs were met by relevant policy responses.

These terms of reference set the tune for the work methodology: young people had to be studied "in their own right". This meant developing a technique of analysis based primarily on individual, thus subjective, data. The study had to be empirical and phenomenological rather than theoretical or abstract, and its conclusions had to be drawn from the "voices" of young people themselves; not from any theoretical hypothesis - no matter how sophisticated - on the essence or nature of today's youth.

Data and data sources

The data employed have been drawn from a number of fields of enquiry. Their variety is best illustrated by showing their application to the three basic questions the project set out to answer:

i) What were young people thinking or feeling about the issues at stake? Sources: attitude research and, to a lesser extent, research on individual development and socialisation processes.

ii) What were they doing about them? Sources: education and manpower statistics.

iii) What were they perceived or thought to be needing by the adult community, essentially parents, teachers, employers, administrators and policy-makers? Sources: attitude studies, policy designs and official statements from national and local administrations.

The final analysis drew upon more than 120 publications or documents. These sources, listed in the Bibliography, were proposed, and the data from them considered by a group of specialists and national representatives who had been advising the Secretariat (itself an active research participant) on the project throughout the two-and-a-half years. Most valuable have been the contributions from Member countries summarising their knowledge on specific topics or translating particularly significant national documents. The principal participating countries were: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Canada, Greece, New Zealand and Norway also made notable contributions.

The analysis

The data analysis has been developed through three main stages, or levels:

1. Drawing of typical youth profiles in terms of attitudes and expectations.

2. Contrasting these "subjective" profiles with youth behaviour - statistically observed - in order to establish more "objective" patterns of young people's characteristics, on the basis of which their needs have been inferred.

3. Confrontation of these "composite" profiles of attitudes and needs with the models of youth underlying implicitly or explicitly a number of current policy approaches.

This analytical process has been used twice in the report. First to assess the terms of the problem at a general level (Chapter I:) and then, more deeply, in the subsequent chapters to investigate specific educational and work issues and problems of particular groups of young people.

Each of the three levels of analysis has presented its own methodological problems, which it may be of use to record in summary here.

i) Attitudes

The main difficulty in this area has come from the degree of heterogeneity of the data available in terms of country coverage, typology of research designs, size of samples and reliability of studies.

The situation was inescapable as the variety in the "scientific" quality of the information on youth available goes hand in hand with its abundance. Both reflect the renewed and widespread concern with youth in various learned circles and

interest groups, each of which has engaged in its own pursuit of knowledge and understanding with a different mastery of the specific technical skills needed for the task at hand.

The assessment and measure of attitudes is a highly complex field of research where the pitfalls are as numerous as the achievements. Some of the documents analysed in the report visibly present the best guarantees in this respect, for others the methodology looks more dubious. Each of them, however, carries with it a certain amount of information that can be extracted given an appropriate method of data analysis.

The resolve taken has therefore been not to reduce the variety of the information by disregarding what looked at face value "unscientific" but rather to capitalise on it. Instead of resting on single "methodology proof" pieces of evidence which would have been hardly generalisable, each discussion point in the analysis has been made to bear on a carefully balanced selection of various data each of which would contribute in its own way to build a meaningful pattern of information.

More concretely, collections of evidence have been put together by juxtaposing international to national studies, large-scale "polar" (yes/no) opinion surveys to smaller-scale "scaled" or in-depth research enquiries, structured to unstructured experimental designs. In other words, information coming from cross country studies and offering the best guarantee of homogeneity and comparability of results has been confronted with results from specific national studies to counterbalance the possible biases coming from faulty transposition of questions in the various languages and culture settings. Information from large-scale unsophisticated yes/no enquiries has been checked whenever possible with data coming from smaller-scale research work providing more articulate attitude material. Finally, attitude data coming from questionnaire enquiries (where the possibility could have existed of putting the researchers' own words "in the mouths" of youth, as it were) have been completed, whenever possible, with information elicited from the young themselves in less structured research models.

This methodology has been applied virtually throughout the report. Examples can be seen in the discussion on "family"-related attitudes (Chapter I) where a seven-country large-scale international study has been confronted with six national studies, each of which bears its specific methodological brand. The analysis of "political" attitudes in Chapter I is another illustration of the same guiding principle (two international studies and five national ones) as are the discussions on the perceived match or mismatch between one's educational credentials and one's job requirements in Chapter II (one international study and three national ones) or on youth attitudes towards the first experiences of employment, in Chapter III (one international study and five national ones).

ii) Behaviour

The comparison of young people's attitudes with statistical data on their behaviour in relevant situations was introduced in the analysis as a kind of "objective" verification that what they seemed to be thinking or feeling was neither a hollow claim on their part nor an artefact of the research methodology but something that bore a degree of reality.

The main problem met at this level of analysis, developed especially in Chapters II and III, was the specificity of existing statistical evidence on which to draw. The most exhaustive information available comes from official statistics gathered independently by education and manpower authorities in varying degrees of detail. As each set of data reflects more the nature and concerns of the institution carrying out the survey than the wholesome nature of their target groups, the two numerical "universes" are, for technical reasons, not easy to put together or to compare. Thus the much-needed contrast between young people's attitudes and their behaviour has remained confined to specific issues and situations in schools or in the labour market which by and large have had to be analysed separately.

Within each "subfield" of interest, however, a large enough variety of studies has been published to make the attitudes/behaviour combination a meaningful one to pursue. One example is the vocational concerns and interests of youth, examined at the level of attitudes in Chapter I and contrasted with actual behaviour (changes in educational enrolment) in Chapter II. Another is the discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of prolonged education analysed in Chapter II, where the expressed attitudes of the overall school population have been fruitfully compared with the measured statistical flows in and out of education in three participating countries.

Much the same pattern of analysis has been followed for the discussion of sex stereotyped attitudes and behaviour in education (Chapter II) where statistical and opinion data coming mostly from national enquiries in eight countries have been considered.

iii) Youth and models of youth

The confrontation of emerging youth profiles with assumed youth characteristics in learned analysis or policy designs has been made in two different contexts. First, models of post-industrial societies and of attributes of their younger generations (Chapter I) have been contrasted with current attitudinal and statistical data on young people (crime, drugs, alcohol, suicide, illegitimate pregnancies).

In the second place, specific policy formulations and official statements in the fields of secondary education and youth unemployment have been discussed in relation with the inferred needs of groups of young people in education and work (Chapters II, III and IV).

The main methodological problem at this level of analysis has come from the difficulty to identify common traits along which to compare "hypothetical" youth and "real" youth directly. Few of the theoretical and policy formulations have developed attitude or behaviour "indicators" that could be monitored empirically. Few of the empirical observations have been designed with specific reference to certain sociological or policy models. This problem is particularly acute in matters of education or training where the opinions of the beneficiaries with respect to real policy interventions have been assumed only sporadically, if at all.

The contrast between inferred youth needs and social models or policy formulations has thus been necessarily indirect. The terms of comparisons have been brought to bear at a higher level of abstraction, where the inferred needs and characteristics of young people have been contrasted only with possible extrapolations of the relevant elements in the models otherwise developed.

Given the kind of information available, such a degree of remoteness in the analysis was unavoidable. Remoteness however does not necessarily imply meaninglessness. To the extent that both youthful attitudes and adults' assumptions about youth reflect real situations, common ground between the two is not impossible to find. This analysis has tried to build such a bridge - in general terms when detailed information was not readily available (as for the societal models considered in Chapter I) and in a more thorough fashion when both the attitudinal and programme data allowed it, as for the discussion on the impact of work experience programmes on their young clients (Chapter III).

Validity of the analysis

The main strength of this study, then, comes from the carefully balanced variety of its data base. The novelty of the analysis does not reside in any additive insight on any of the documents consulted, taken independently or in small groups; it lies, rather, in this being the first time that information coming from usually unrelated fields of enquiry has been contrasted and from its description of national realities not often brought together. The amount and diversity of information coming from the other side of the Atlantic and from the Pacific has greatly extended the baseline from which the study has been able to proceed, and has correspondingly strengthened its conclusions.

The trends and implications emerging from the study are not as sharply assessed as one would have wanted. The methodological problems encountered with attitude data make the conclusions valid more in a qualitative than in a quantititive way, it often being possible to assess the importance of the various elements only in relative rather than absolute terms. So, the study cannot be expected, for instance, to provide clear-cut quantitative estimates as to how many of the early leavers in OECD Member countries suffer prolonged hardship in their transition from school to work. Nevertheless, it can conclude confidently that

limited educational qualifications are not necessarily an unsurmountable handicap in the labour market and that the youngsters most affected remain a minority of the age group.

Strictly speaking, the validity of the analysis remains thus limited to the results outlined in the report. Within these boundaries, however, the methodological approach adopted has insured that the most has been made of the available data. One is tempted to conclude, however, with a glance at what more would have been possible with a wider data base.

More complete results could have been achieved, for example, if youth research in OECD countries were better co-ordinated across agencies and investigators, if statistical material did not bear so visibly the mark of the underlying institutional concerns. Cross-generational data are very scarce, as are extensive demographic data on youth information exploring changes and stability in behaviour beyond the very first experience of adult life.

All these elements are missing from the analysis mainly because they have, by and large, not been produced in the countries. Their absence contributes to narrow the scope of this report as of any analysis of youth problems.

This report, however, as any other of the same kind, can be seen to reflect factors ranging well outside its terms of reference. Through the analysis of what data are available and what are not, of where they originate and why, other insights can be achieved, for instance into the institutional and research concerns expressing themselves through their work on youth, into other aspects of youth in our society, into the stereotyped beliefs that exist about them, the challenge they might represent, or the indifference with which they might in fact be considered by the adult community. Each bit of news carries all kinds of information. The question is not so much where the information stops, but how far the reader wants to push the unveiling of it.

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